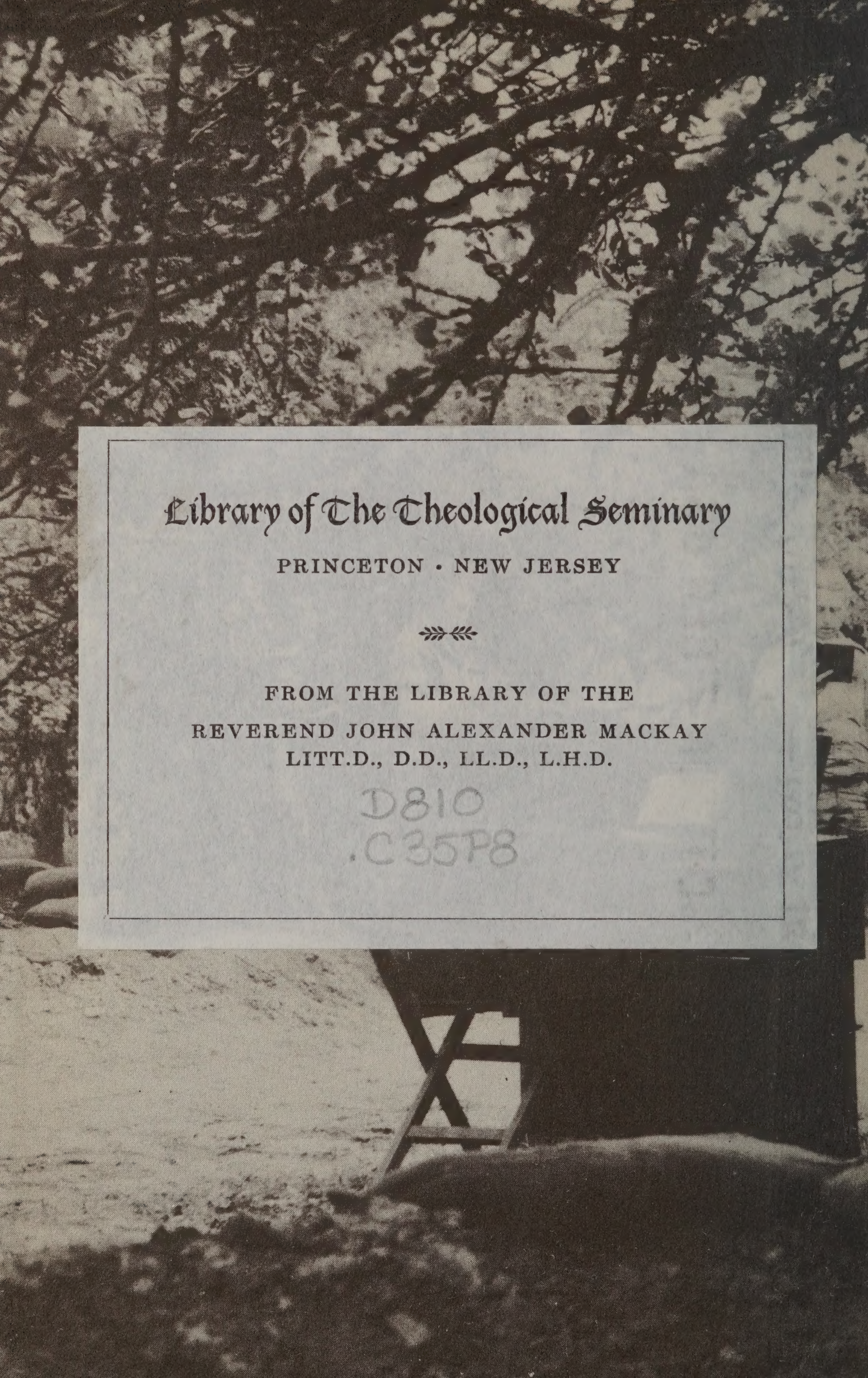

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STORIES FROM LUTHERAN CHAPLAINS
ON THE FAR-FLUNG BATTLEFRONTS

* * * *

Compiled by
Frederick C. Proehl

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This volume is gratefully dedicated to the faithful and heroic chaplains of the Lutheran Church whose loyalty and self-effacing service to the men and women in the military is reflected in these pages.

F. C. P.

Preface

Many volumes have been written regarding the heroic endeavors of the American forces on both fronts, glorifying the services of every branch of the American fighting forces. Stories also have appeared in the newspapers and magazines telling of the heroism of chaplains serving in the Army and in the Navy. Seldom has there been reference made to chaplains of the Lutheran Church, since the majority of them hesitate to speak of their experiences, fearing the charge of self-aggrandizement.

The author of this volume has given, not only an historical background of the Army and Navy Commission of the Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod, but has compiled in these pages an account of what the Lutheran chaplains of our Church group have experienced while serving with the Army and Navy, both in the European and in the Far Eastern theaters of war. Since he was in constant touch with our chaplains, answering their monthly reports and giving advice and counsel, he was in a position to select human interest material which depicts graphically the self-effacing and matchless spiritual service performed in behalf of the men.

I am satisfied that this volume holds tremendous appeal for Lutheran people everywhere, since it tells the story of a consecrated group of clergymen who preached the Word in season and out of season, in every clime, and under every conceivable condition.

Karl W. F. Schleede, *Chaplain (Col.), Ret.*
Headquarters Sixth Corps

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Marching Side by Side

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The Lutheran Chaplains' Corps

ONLY A FEW OF US have been privileged to view at first hand the many fascinating accounts of the matchless service performed by the Chaplains' Corps of the Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod. It has been my assignment to review the chaplains' monthly reports which came to our offices from the far-flung battle fronts and also to answer correspondence directed to the Army and Navy Commission of the Lutheran Church from the chaplains themselves, who were assigned to duty with the military. The endless streams of information and the stories teeming with human interest paint a picture portraying devotion to duty and earnestness of purpose which surpasses by far all that has been previously recorded and buried in the archives of the Church. The Lutheran clergymen who answered the call to serve the fighting men knew at the outset that their task would be a challenge to their physical and spiritual strength. But they cheerfully offered themselves to preach Christ Crucified to these men who were about to die and to minister to them under every condition and in every clime, utterly disregarding their personal comfort and safety.

Many a tale of heroism on the part of our chaplains has been printed in the public press. Many more will be written. They will come to us eventually through the accounts of war correspondents and commanding officers who give citations to those who have demonstrated courage and heroism beyond the call of duty. Chaplains are notoriously loath to speak of their accomplishments and are reluctant to send information concerning citations.

It will be almost impossible to refer to every chaplain of our Church in these pages, for it would take volumes to record their performance of task. However, we shall see their activities reflected in the stories which have reached us from many theaters of war. We shall follow our chaplains to every theater of operation, from the fog-bound Aleutians to the tranquil South Seas, from frigid Iceland to the burning sands of the African desert. We will see them at Salerno and on the Anzio beachhead. We shall hear them tell of their experiences in landing with the first troops on New Guinea. We shall find them with the invading forces that landed on the coasts of Normandy on D Day. We shall hear them tell of their ministrations under every conceivable condition of military warfare, readily adapting themselves to the ever-changing conditions and to the varying fortunes of war.

The resourcefulness of our chaplains is a source of continual wonderment to us. We find them gathering men together for services in the jungles of New Guinea, using rustic altars made from materials at hand, with palms and jungle growth as a background. Empty gasoline tins and roughly hewn logs serve as pews, and during the services lizards sidle through the congregation, and rats scurry about under foot. We find them preaching to a congregation under the protecting boughs of trees, and then again in caves which once served as wine cellars and storage places for the goods of Italian nobles. The singing of Christian hymns to the accompaniment of a collapsible field organ, emanating sometimes from haymows and sometimes from barns which bore the evidence of ruthless warfare, is a common experience in Italy and in France. We observe men standing in the rain devoutly listening to the preaching of the Word, gladly defying the elements in order to gain the comforts of

God's own truth. We find chaplains conducting brief devotions during the lull of battle. In the background there may be the accompaniment of artillery fire, and enemy shells may be dropping in the immediate vicinity, but the services go on, because combat soldiers have learned the sustaining power of the Scriptures. We see our chaplains at the first-aid stations, speaking words of cheer and consolation to the wounded and the dying. We follow them from bedside to bedside in the hospitals, giving consolation to the shattered and the torn who are confined in the various wards. Singular experiences have been recorded by chaplains who were assigned to hospital ships, and their stories will be repeated in these pages.

Our chaplains were also appointed to positions of responsibility, acting in the capacity of corps and divisional chaplains, their years of service aptly fitting them for these positions of trust.

Our clergymen in the military serve without fanfare, following the troops to the various combat areas, oblivious to personal dangers. Many of them have gone for months, yes, years, doing their duty without complaint, the matchless record of their service not being indicated by the rank they wear, because many are assigned to posts or battalions where the tables of organization do not allow an increase in rank. The chaplains do not exercise command. Their commissions simply place them in a certain pay bracket. We are happy to know that our chaplains are not looking for material advantages, but rather for the opportunity to serve Christ and to minister to blood-bought souls.

This story might never have been written had it not been for two overtures submitted to the Twenty-first Delegate Synod assembled at Cleveland, Ohio, June 19–28, 1935. For the sake of the record we are giving you both memorials, one submitted by the Southern San Joaquin Valley Pastoral Conference of the California and Nevada District, the other by the Atlantic District of our Synod.

To the Hon. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States

Whereas, The Lord of the Church from time to time opens new and greater opportunities for the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ among our fellow citizens, as, *e. g.*, in the Civilian Conservation Corps and other Government enterprises; and

Whereas, We have proportionate percentage of fellow Lutherans as well as many unchurched and spiritually neglected who are apt to become promising mission material for our Church and Synod in the public services of our nation, such as the Army and Navy; and

Whereas, The religious needs of our own men in the service as well as those whom we can gain for the Savior can best and most effectively be served by orthodox Lutheran chaplains in the Army and Navy, both in times of peace and war; and

Whereas, In accordance with the principle of separation of Church and State our Church and Synod is entitled, and has a distinct direction, to be adequately represented in these services, since attendance at religious services is never commanded nor compulsory, the United States Goverment merely providing a fair opportunity for the men to have their spiritual needs provided for; and

Whereas, In strict accordance with the same fundamental principle of our Church and United States Government a chaplain does not receive pay as a clergyman or exponent of a certain sect or religion, but merely receives compensation and allowances as a military officer in accordance with his grade, rank, and length of service in the armed forces of our country; and

Whereas, Thus the acceptance of a commission in the United States Chaplains' Corps is in no wise contrary to Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Constitution of Synod, and violates no article of faith nor synodical principle of doctrine and practice (cp. the relevant *Army Regulations,* excerpts of which are appended herewith); and

Whereas, The very object of Synod, as set forth in Article III, *Constitution of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States,* especially in paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 of this article, are best and most advantageously accomplished in this large mission field by having such of our clergy as are especially fitted for this type of work represented in the United States Chaplains' Corps; therefore be it

Resolved, That the various District Mission Boards, in consultation and concurrence with the General Secretary for Home Missions, be authorized to 1) make necessary recommendations of orthodox Lutheran pastors qualified for appointment to the chaplaincy to the Adjutant General in Washington, D. C., through proper channels, 2) endorse qualified men for this appointment in accordance with the law and existing regulations, and 3) officially commission such pastors as qualify for this important soul-saving service in the Army and Navy of the United States of America, both in times of peace and war.

Respectfully submitted by

THE SOUTHERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY PASTORAL CONFERENCE
OF THE CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA DISTRICT
E. F. MUELLER, *Chairman* L. A. KUEFFNER, *Secretary*

To the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States,
assembled at Cleveland, Ohio, in June 1935

The Atlantic District, assembled at Albany, N. Y., in June, 1934, *resolved* to recommend to the Synod the adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, A Committee of the New York District Pastoral Conference, consisting of Pastors O. C. Busse, Wm. Koepchen, and Louis S. Wagner, after a careful study of the Army Regulations and the training manual of the United States Army, *The Chaplain, His Place and Duties,* "prepared under the direction of the Chief of Chaplains," finds nothing that is contrary to the doctrines, tenets, and practices of the Lutheran Church (for both the Army regulations and the training manual state very clearly: "The chaplain will give such religious ministration as the rites and practices of his Church may warrant"; Army Regulations No. 60-5, *e. g.*, state: "In matters touching upon methods of work and professional training which do not involve church doctrine, supervisory authority over chaplains is vested in the Chief of Chaplains"); and

WHEREAS, The number of our Lutheran boys in the Regular Army as well as in the Citizens' Military Training Camps is ever on the increase; and

WHEREAS, Provision should be made for their spiritual care through Lutheran chaplains; and

WHEREAS, Under present conditions, Lutheran chaplains must receive their endorsement from the General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States cause the appointment of a committee to be known as the Army and Navy Commission of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, as provided for under the provisions of the Army Regulations No. 605-30 (see p. 7, par. 19, of the training manual, *The Chaplain, His Place and Duties*); and be it further

Resolved, That this commission be empowered by the Synod to recommend men of our Church for chaplaincies, to supervise the calling and recalling of these men, and to be entrusted with the authority to demand regular reports from all the Lutheran chaplains of our Synod in the United States Army on their work and activities; and be it further

Resolved, That the personnel of this commission consist of at least three members, two of whom ought to hold commissions as chaplains in the Regular Army, National Guard, or the Officers' Reserve.

Respectfully submitted for the Atlantic District

ARTHUR BRUNN, *President*
KARL KRETZMANN, *Secretary*

It will be noted that the memorial of the Southern San Joaquin Valley Pastoral Conference of the California and Nevada District recommended that the various District Mission Boards be authorized to make recommendations for the appointment of chaplains, whereas the memorial of the Atlantic District favored the appointment of an Army and Navy Commission of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, and that this Commission be recognized as the endorsing agency of chaplains, with specific duty to supervise the work and to call Lutheran pastors competent for the chaplaincy.

The Atlantic District Memorial gave impetus to the resolution adopted by Synod that a committee be appointed to investigate the chaplaincy in order to ascertain whether or not a Lutheran pastor could serve in the chaplaincy in the Army and Navy without compromising the tenets of the Lutheran Church and violating conscience.

A committee appointed by the President of the Missouri Synod, Dr. J. W. Behnken, met at Bronxville, New York, October 16, 1935, and submitted the following report:

To the Honorable President of Missouri Synod
The Reverend Mr. J. W. Behnken, D. D.
Oak Park, Illinois

Pursuant to the resolution of Synod, your Committee has carefully studied the official documents regarding the office and functions of the chaplaincy in the Army and Navy.

The Committee also heard reliable testimony from several of our pastors who have been chaplains in the Army. Furthermore, the committee received interpretations personally from the Chief of Chaplains on some of the paragraphs and wordings of the regulations which were indefinite and might be variously interpreted. The committee was impressed with the fact that again and again it is emphasized in these documents that the chaplains are to function "According to their respective creeds and conscientious practice in each case" (A. R. 60-5, p. 3).

Although they are under the authority of the commanding officers, this provision does not imply any direction as to their spiritual ministry. Consequently, the conscientious Lutheran chaplain can avoid all unionistic practices. This is corroborated by pastors who have been chaplains in the Army.

The Committee is also convinced that in offering our men for the chaplaincy there is no departure from the accepted Scriptural position of our Synod on the separation of Church and State. The Government is interested in the moral welfare of the Army and Navy and presents, through the chaplaincy, opportunities for service to those who desire the ministrations of the chaplain, and while it contributes towards the maintenance of the chaplains a stipulated allowance, this does not conflict with the doctrine of the separation of Church and State, especially since he must perform his duties "in conformity with the teachings of denominational beliefs. . . ." (*The Chaplain, His Place and Duties*, p. 13.) And again: "The chaplain will naturally give such religious ministrations as the rites and practices of his Church warrant, provided it be seen that such are desired by the patient." (*The Chaplain, His Place and Duties*, page 23.)

Furthermore, the Church commissions or calls these men, and even though appointed by the Government, they represent us only as long as they conform to the principles and practices of our Synod as members in good standing.

Therefore we hold that the President should carry out the resolution of the Cleveland convention and forthwith appoint an Army and Navy Board.

Respectively submitted,

THE COMMITTEE ON ARMY AND NAVY CHAPLAINCY
GEO. A. ROMOSER, *Chairman*
J. FREDERIC WENCHEL, *Secretary*
H. D. MENSING
A. G. DICK
F. C. PROEHL

Since a favorable report was made by the committee on Army and Navy chaplaincies, the Board of Directors appointed the first Army and Navy Commission in the year of 1936. The following pastors of the Missouri Synod were chosen to represent Synod: the Rev. Geo. A. Romoser, D. D., chairman; the Rev. Paul Dannenfeldt; the Rev. H. D. Mensing; the Rev. F. C. Proehl; and the Rev. Karl Schleede.

A clear-cut policy of operation was developed by the Army and Navy Commission during its first meeting, June 3, 1936, at Bronxville, N. Y. Regulations governing the relationship between chaplains and the commission, questionnaires relative to the competency of applicants for the chaplaincy, and the *modus operandi* in dealing with clergymen desiring a commission were established over a period of time. This was an entirely new field, and utmost care had to be exercised in order to comply not only with Army regulations, but also to select only such clergymen as were well grounded in the faith, firmly established in doctrine, and who had the physical strength and educational background to measure up to requirements.

Quietly the Commission went to work to fill the Church's quota of regular Army and Navy chaplains and to build a Chaplains' Reserve Corps of highly qualified Lutheran pastors who might be ready to answer the country's call in an emergency.

When in the fall of 1940 the National Defense program was put into effect, the Commission was extremely fortunate to have on its roster not less than three Regular Army and two Regular Navy chaplains and forty chaplains in the Reserve Corps. The mobilization of the National Guard and the induction of thousands of young men got under way, and the quota for Lutheran chaplains of our denomination grew by leaps and bounds. We were ready to fill the needs and were able to keep abreast with the demands made upon us. Not only were Lutheran pastors found in the United States ready to answer the call for the chaplaincy, but clergymen in Canada saw the need and made themselves available for service with the Canadian service units.

Today we have no fewer than 233 men commissioned as chaplains in the United States Army and Navy and with the Canadian forces. They are classified as follows:

U. S. Navy – Regular	5
U. S. Navy – Reserve	6
U. S. Army – Regular	4
Army of the United States	210
Canadian Army	5
Not on Active Duty	3

The number is still growing, as new applications are processed during the monthly meetings of the Army and Navy Commission. When these lines go to print, we hope to have a Chaplains' Corps of not less than 250 chaplains of the Missouri Synod serving in every theater of war.

MEMBERS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY COMMISSION

The first chairman of the Army and Navy Commission was the sainted Rev. George A. Romoser, D. D., then president of the Concordia Collegiate Institute, Bronxville, N. Y. The vacancy created by his death was filled by the Rev. O. A. Sauer, pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Richmond, Va., who has served as secretary to the Commission since his appointment in September, 1936. The Rev. Henry D. Mensing succeeded Dr. Romoser to the chairmanship. When he departed this life Dec. 16, 1940, Pastor Paul L. Dannenfeldt was appointed chairman by the President of Synod. Besides the chairman, two of the original members are still serving in the Commission. These are the Rev. Karl W. Schleede, Schenectady, N. Y., and the Rev. Frederick C. Proehl, Milwaukee, Wis.

Rev. Otto E. Sohn, Flint, Mich., was added to the Commission to replace Pastor Mensing. Since the expansion of the program of the Army and Navy Commission demanded more manpower, two Chicago attorneys were appointed. Mr. Otto C. Rentner, member of the Chicago Bar Association, and Mr. Theodore H.

Schlake, corporation counsel, have served since May, 1941. As treasurer of the Army and Navy Commission Mr. Schlake has disbursed more than two million dollars, made available for the Commission by the Lutherans of our Church group, to develop an outstanding program of spiritual service for the military.

The offices of the Army and Navy Commission were established in Chicago during November, 1940, with the Rev. Edmund Weber, then associated with the Lutheran Missionary Association of Fort Wayne, Ind., in charge as executive secretary. Under his guidance the office routine was established, and mailing service to the members of our Church was inaugurated. Since Pastor Weber was a Reserve Corps Chaplain, he was called to active duty in the spring of 1942. Rev. Paul Mehl was chosen as his successor and entered upon his duties in October, 1942, coming to Chicago from the Lutheran Service Center, Alexandria, La.

Today the headquarters of the Army and Navy Commission is located in the Wacker-La Salle Building, 221 North La Salle St., Chicago, from where thousands of pieces of literature, such as *Loyalty*, *Loyalty News*, prayer books, directories, tracts, and prayer cards, are mailed to service men and women, and from where the service of supplies for chaplains is maintained without interruption.

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The Aleutians

William J. Reiss	*Kenneth L. Ahl*
Fred W. Niermann	*Roland K. Lemke*
R. H. Zinter	*Clyde Hahn*
Waldemar Hinck	*Walter E. Hartmann*
Leonard Heidemann	*Herbert Vogel*

DURING THE TIME that the Japanese were intrenching themselves firmly on Attu and Kiska islands, thereby constituting a real threat to our Western coastline, our American forces were rushed to Alaska to fortify the borders and to install coastal artillery. The heroic achievement of our engineers and the infantry during these early days of the war is a story all its own and must wait to be told in detail at the close of the war. Among the pioneers who were sent to this cold and rugged possession of the United States was Chaplain William J. Reiss, of whom we shall hear later in connection with his activities in France. Chaplain Reiss received his orders for this assignment in September, 1942. He developed a magnificent program of spiritual service for the men amidst the most primitive conditions under which men would be expected to live. His meritorious service was recognized in a citation by Brigadier General Lloyd E. Jones of the United States Army.

Far from the sources of supply, every kind of material had to be husbanded, so that there was little thought of building a regulation Army chapel as we find them in our camps in the United States. Thus, halls and recreation rooms had to serve the purpose of chapels, and these were sanctified by the Word and by the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with prayer. The ingenuity of the American soldier also took care of supplying the necessary quarters for the chaplains as the months rolled by. Hutments were set aside for chapels, being distinguished from the others by crude rustic crosses affixed to the roofs over the entrances. Partly covered with snow, these hutments perhaps did not look different from any other in the neighborhood as far as the exterior was concerned, but the interior represented a real churchly atmosphere, soldiers having freely contributed of their time and of their talents to provide those things which are symbolical in our churches at home. Crosses and candelabra were hammered out of shell casements. Artists painted pictures of Christ, which were placed in the altar made from materials available. Pulpits and altar rails were fashioned from crude lumber. Discarded helmets were used to create an indirect lighting effect for want of adequate lighting fixtures. These houses of worship were appreciated by the men all the more because they had made personal contributions.

We can best understand the attitude and the appreciation of our soldiery in the Aleutians from a letter written by Chaplain Reiss after he had finished almost two years of service in this section. He said in a letter:

"Another year of God's grace is fast drawing to a close. And as we stop to count our blessings in the past year, we cannot but stop and fall to our knees to thank God for His protection and grace, as He guides us through these perilous conflict days.

"The past year indeed has brought many an experience which even time cannot erase. Often I am reminded of that day in January when in Fort Wayne you spoke of cemeteries and burials to the thirty-odd chaplains assembled there. And as friends you have come to love, friends who have shared foxholes as well as bomber cabins with you, are laid to rest here in the Aleutians never to return home again, you cannot help thanking God for His goodness to you.

"During these past twenty months spent overseas I have come to appreciate more and more the farsightedness of the members of the Army and Navy Commission, their care and concern for us chaplains as well as for our Lutheran men. Repeatedly has praise been heaped upon your heads by men who know very little about you but that your program for the men has been the outstanding feature in service to men away from home in this conflict. Our Lutheran Church has gained a reputation in this war of which we can be proud. I do hope and pray God that we will not be content to rest upon our laurels, but be inspired to even greater heights in the years to come.

"My work in Alaska has been very interesting. It has shown me that a man can accomplish much for the cause of Christ if he has a desire to. I have come to love this rugged country and hope that after this conflict ends I might be able to pass on some good advice gained by contact with many points in this territory to the Foreign Mission Board.

"The time is drawing near for my return to the United States. I am happy in the thought of seeing my wife and four-year-old son. I hope that after a short period in the States I will again be sent overseas to another field of combat.

"If ever religion has meant anything, it surely means all to the men here. Their desire to hear God's Word causes them to walk up to five miles in the worst kind of weather just to attend services, and then their attitude of worship is one that thrills the heart of the chaplain. These men live their religion. It means everything to them. Instead of being separated from their Church, they are daily being brought closer and closer to it. That is why a man should be willing to serve his Church in the armed forces. God has made the opening, He expects us to carry His torch for Him. Pray God we don't fail Him in this crisis hour.

"At present I have fifteen chaplains under me, and it keeps me rather busy getting around to see them and keep them all in line. It is my hope to soon visit Chaplain Niermann, who now is my neighbor, if you want to call a hundred-mile separation a neighbor. I am kept very busy with all my work, but I can still manage to preach seven times on Sunday and hold special Advent services during the week. When I return to civilian life, I shall never complain with only three services a week."

During the summer of 1942 Chaplain Fred W. Niermann received his orders to proceed to the Aleutians in order to share the ever-increasing work of spiritual ministry with Chaplain Reiss. Chaplain Niermann came to the chaplaincy from Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church at West Frankfort, Ill. When he left the comfort and security of this midwestern parish, he never anticipated that he would be sent to the cold and rugged extremes of the Aleutians. But he took up his work with a spirit of self-effacing service and worked side by side with Chaplain Reiss, expending his energies in preaching the saving truth.

He soon learned to form a new estimate of what work actually means, for the great need called for not less than seven services on Sunday and several preaching services during the week aside from the many personal interviews that were granted to the men who had personal problems.

In performing their duties our chaplains in the Aleutians had to travel great distances over terrain which was impassable for the jeeps and other means of transportation. Sometimes outlying implacements were visited via communication launches or even by planes. More often these chaplains had to walk more than 30 miles on a given Sunday in order to bring the message of comfort to the men who were in isolated and far-off places.

The following chaplains served in quick succession: Chaplain R. H. Zinter, who arrived in March, 1943, and Chaplain Waldemar Hinck, who took up his duties in May, 1943, the latter remaining there until the present hour. During July, 1943, Chaplin Leonard Heidemann also arrived, supplying one of the vacancies which were created by returning chaplains who were given a respite from the exacting and ever-strenuous labors in the Aleutians. Chaplain Herbert Vogel joined the forces in the Alaskan theater during the month of June, 1943, and continues to give service to the men wherever the need requires. Among the heroic band that served up there was Chaplain Kenneth L. Ahl and Chaplain Roland K. Lemke. All these men seemed to take their cue from Chaplain William Reiss and continued to develop such an outstanding program of spiritual service that it will be the envy of those serving in other theaters of war.

Chaplain Walter Hartmann speaks of his experiences in the following words.

"'I want you to go and spend some time on the outposts of —— island. Those men have not seen a chaplain for some time. You personally will not know the Aleutians unless you have done some work on those outposts," said the *AD* chaplain as I sat in his office about to leave the mainland. The man was right with his last remark. I am now at work at one of these outposts, and, frankly speaking, my Army career would be incomplete if I had missed the boat for Alaska. Up to date I have made six trips to get to the various units. The travel is made by boat, by jeep, by caterpillar tractor trailer, and by foot, climbing the hills and ledges of the Aleutians. This 'gateway to Asia' presents some of the most difficult terrain and weather conditions to be found in the world. Each outpost might have but a handful of men, and although not in actual combat, each man is definitely doing a job in these isolated areas. Perhaps once a week a small boat comes in with cargo mail and movie films. You can imagine how delighted these men are when a visitor comes in to spend some time with them. At a suitable hour the chaplain holds a service for them. The turnout is excellent, and I have never

Lutheran Services in Alaska Conducted by Chaplain Herbert P. Vogel

Somewhere in India: Chaplain Ervin Hartman Conducts Services in a Bamboo Basha had a more attentive audience. At these places I also find my own Lutheran boys. My jeep driver is a Walther Leaguer from Seymour, Ind. How happy these Lutherans are to see a chaplain of their own faith showing up in their midst once again and they are given an opportunity to partake of Holy Communion."

CHAPLAIN CLYDE HAHN

The only Protestant chaplain to participate in the attack on the island of Attu was Chaplain Clyde Hahn. Assigned to the 17th Infantry of the famous 7th Division, he participated in the landing of the American troops not far from Holtz Bay. Although the Americans found no immediate opposition while making their landing and establishing a beachhead, yet the battle for Attu developed into a bloody battle for supremacy and fanatical resistance by the entrenched Japanese.

The vicious, suicidal fighting of the Japs is a record of history. We know with what reckless abandonment they challenged every foot of advance on the part of the American troops. When it became evident that they could not stem the ever-growing fighting power of the American contingent, the hopeless Japanese soldiers committed suicide by the scores. Here Chaplain Clyde Hahn had opportunity to show his quality and worth. It was he who knelt in the frozen snow at the side of many a soldier, helping him to take that one step between life and death. Here he had the first taste of the stark realities of war and had to perform that mournful service of committing his comrades to the frozen earth of Attu. It was here that he laid out the first A. E. F. cemetery to bury the heroic dead of our troops. Oblivious to the dangers on every hand, he insisted on being with the troops where the going was toughest.

When a certain detail was assigned to clear out machine gun implacements entrenched on the rugged heights of Attu, which continually harassed our forces, Chaplain Clyde Hahn insisted on going along. As the Americans struggled up the steep heights in the semidarkness, they suddenly found themselves staring into the muzzles of Japanese machine guns. Withdrawing too quickly, Chaplain Hahn lost his footing and fell down the precipice. His ever-faithful clerk, Corporal Walter Shulenberg, rushed to his side expecting to find his beloved chaplain dead. Finding the chaplain alive, though unconscious, he had him removed to a hospital, where it was found that through the fall Hahn had so wrenched his back that his legs were paralyzed. For two months he was confined to a hospital in Alaska, then transferred to Vancouver, Wash., and remained there at Carnes General Hospital for a period of several months. Gradually he found life returning to his limbs and was able to return to his parish during February, 1944. He left West Columbia, S. C., as a faithful servant of the Word and came back to this little parish as one who had established himself as a man of courage with a burning desire to serve his Master amidst every condition of warfare. We know that his brief but exciting period of service as chaplain in the United States Army has made him a better, more consecrated servant of the Word.

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The Pilgrim's Progress in India

RAILROAD SAGA

Ervin H. Hartman

Serving first in camp wallace, tex., during the summer of 1942, Chaplain Ervin H. Hartman was transferred the last month of the same year to Camp Van Dorn, Miss. From Oct. 9 until Oct. 28, 1943, he was confined to the Camp Polk hospital, La. After a convalescent period he proceeded to Camp Maxey, Tex. During the spring of 1944 we find him on the way to an assignment beyond the continental United States. His experience over in India in connection with the Military Railway Service is a most interesting one as set forth in his "Pilgrim's Progress in India."

"When the saga of the railroaders in India is told, it would not be complete unless it also included some mention of me, The Pilgrim. It is true, mine was but a minor part in the great story of American men, the majority of whom were railroaders in America, donning the khaki of Uncle Sam, and under most unfavorable conditions, fraught with many dangers and hardships, supplied the men behind the guns at the front in a manner predicated at the very outset as impossible. But as elsewhere on the world's battlefields, so here in India these men lived up to the great American tradition – it has to be done, we will do it, and they did it. Like the night I was coupled to the locomotive and behind us a long string of freight cars, and the engineer of that train little more than a boy. He had never driven a powerful locomotive until he came to India as a railroading soldier. But that did not daunt him now, nor that the night was pitch black, and he driving that train in complete blackout. I remember the night especially, for when the Chaplain returned to the car, after riding the engine for four hours, he talked of the lesson in faith he had just learned as they beat their way through the night dependent on so many things over which they had no control. Twenty-six hours later, his train safely stabled in the yards, this young man, now very tired and weary, waved us good-by as he hosteled his engine to the roundhouse. Or the night we came into a station and did not receive a line clear to continue our journey, in fact could find no one around, and not until the engineer came to the barricaded station did he find out that not too far from where he had left his engine a tiger was feasting on a cow that had been hit by an earlier train, but that didn't keep him from returning to his engine with his line-clear token to continue his run. There are hundreds of stories of unsung heroes among these railroaders that I could tell.

"But this is to be my story, the story of The Pilgrim's Progress in India. Once I was just another private car used by officials of the railroad. Then one day I went into the shops where Americans renovated me from end to end. There it was also that I received my name, and with the sign of the Cross painted on my side had the first inkling of my new mission. The Cross explained my new name, but I often wondered if those boys were not also thinking of themselves as weary pilgrims in a strange land, hopefully biding the time when they might go home. America must be a wonderful land, judging from the yearning of these men to return to their homeland. Or, could be that someone gave me that name as a bit of witticism, because I rock and roll so much as we travel on our way that it seemed to them I wandered all over the track. Have not left the track to this date, but I am certain the Chaplain expects that to happen any moment.

"It would be impossible to tell my entire story. But I must give you some idea of The Pilgrim's Progress, for it is unique in our history over here.

"Last Sunday is a good beginning. I knew we were preparing to move again, though we had arrived at headquarters only a few days ago after more than two weeks on the road, for the corporal, he is the chaplain's assistant, scrubbed and polished till it hurt me more than himself. It is impossible to have things too clean for these Americans. A drink of water from a fountain at a railroad station will be a great delight to them once they are home. Today the chaplain would have little time for me, for he would be on the go constantly. Two services in the morning, one at the battalion and another for the headquarters group; another service in the afternoon at the hospital, and then back again to the battalion in the evening for still another service for the men working on the day shift.

"Wondered why I was being groomed so carefully by Tom. We were to have company on this trip. Accompanying the Chaplain was Missionary John G. Steinhoff, serving as military pastor to the Lutheran men stationed in India. Since we covered most of the territory where troops were stationed, the Chaplain was able to render valuable assistance and needed comfort to the missionary traveling under war conditions.

"Shortly after their arrival that evening we were attached to the next up train and on our way to be gone for nineteen days. For this period I would be the home, office, study, and sometimes even chapel of the Chaplain. The corporal was already busy in the kitchen brewing tea. This evening tea had become a ritual with him; somehow he figured it was vital to the Chaplain's health. That night it was very late when my lights were turned out. The Missionary and the Chaplain had much to discuss, their work, and especially the Church so dear to their hearts. Mission work occupied much of their time, and I remember one statement the Chaplain made after a long recital by the Missionary — 'After what I have now seen and heard I will never again be guilty of thinking of missions merely in terms of a budget, or of a mission rally as a routine affair.' The tragedy of a benighted people steeped in the ignorance and superstition of paganism which he had witnessed would never be forgotten. The fields have been ready for the harvest for a long time — it just seems no one cares sufficiently to do the work. If I understand the meaning of that Cross on my side, it meant that once there was One who cared enough, or have I misunderstood your religion? Finally, the conversation drifted back to their Church, and then the Chaplain made a statement that seemed strange to me. 'John,' he said, 'we will all have changed a bit since being over here. We have had no Church to do our religion for us and are wondering how this changed attitude will fit in back home, or if the people will think some strange thing has happened to us.'

"At long last the lights were turned out. Through the night we continued our journey with the deep, impenetrable jungle flanking our sides and the weird cries of jackals disturbing the otherwise quiet of the tropic night. I secretly hoped that after we were cut from the train at our scheduled stop they would not forget to move us off the main line. That happened once before at night, and except for an act of God there would now be no Pilgrim. I doubt if it disturbed the Chaplain much; he always maintained that God's protecting love was adequate under all circumstances over which he had no control. And he was right, for in the morning we were safely stabled on a line next to the camp, and breakfast was ready before either the Chaplain or the Missionary had awakened. According to the Chaplain, Tom has only one fault — he is up and about too early in the morning.

"Today I would again see very little of the Chaplain. In the forenoon he was taking a motor car to visit the men at the intermediate stations, and the remainder of the day would be spent visiting them or conducting divine services in their behalf. Instructions were left with Tom regarding the evening services, and immediately after breakfast the Chaplain was on his way. Making provisions for the services at all the stops was just one of the duties Tom performed so nobly and efficiently. He wanted to be a minister, but then the Army called him. In his battalion, prior to his present duty, he did remarkable work among his comrades, at times even conducted services for them. He is always writing sermons, which he and the Chaplain then discuss. Much of his spare time is filled with study of the Bible. Often wondered where you Christians receive all your nerve and consecration to live the Christian way. Tom and the Chaplain have shown me the secret of your success.

"It certainly was late, rather, early in the morning when the Chaplain and the Missionary turned in. Knew from his bearing that the services were well attended. God is not only reserved for the foxholes. Tonight it was so late, for Missionary Steinhoff conducted an open forum after the service. The men certainly want to know the facts regarding missions. What a new day for India that will be if they keep the zeal they now possess and fire the Church at home upon their return. After the forum the men sat around and aired their favorite gripes and grievances. There has to be someone's shoulder to cry on, and it usually is the Chaplain's. There is one question they always ask him: 'How long before we go home?' Nothing is dearer to them than their homeland and loved ones anxiously awaiting their return. You folks back home have no idea how these men are counting on you to keep their dreams alive. Is it really true that some of you are betraying the trust that is yours? I hear many a sad tale as some of these men unravel them for the Chaplain's ears alone. Oh, that dare not happen to those boys over here. What, then, is left them?

"Three men came back to the car with the Chaplain. Since we were not leaving for another hour, there was still time for Communion service which they desired. Now tonight I would be a chapel for these men. Once men knelt here facing the setting sun, now these four men knelt and looked to Christ. Their gratitude for this special service was not left unspoken, and they feel far kindlier than ever before to the churches back home that are making this possible.

"The engine is coming down the track to pick us up, and soon we will be on our way again. Oh yes, late as it is, Tom is serving tea again. Bet the Chaplain did not notice at all how much I rocked and rolled as we made our way through the night once more. Before noon we shall have reached our next destination, and it will mean another similar procedure for the Chaplain. This is but the beginning of my journey carrying the Chaplain to his comrades with the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. The full story of my progress will only be told in the lives of those men who have received that blessing and have accepted the challenge to build with Christ for a happier and better tomorrow for all mankind. Oh, that the American tradition may be met in this also – it must be done, it will be done. Then these men will not have spent themselves in vain."

Enemy Hears Easter Message

"MEN IN COMBAT LOOK TO GOD FOR GUIDANCE"

Oscar H. Reinboth

WHEN CHAPLAINS ARE SPOKEN OF now and after the war, men of the 349th Infantry Regiment will remember the outstanding work done by twice-decorated Captain Oscar H. Reinboth of Seward, Nebr., holder of the Bronze Star and Oak Leaf Cluster. The citation accompanying the award reads as follows:

"On 13 July 1944 Captain Oscar H. Reinboth, Chaplain, was accompanying 2nd Battalion, 349th Infantry, in the assault of hills in the vicinity of ——, Italy. When the battalion encountered stiff enemy resistance, intense machine gun cross fire pinned the troops down while a mortar barrage worked them over causing many casualties before the troops had opportunity to dig in. The wounded and dead from this intense fire were littered over the open slopes. There were approximately fifteen wounded and six killed in the initial fire. Several members of litter teams had been wounded in the hostile fire in futile attempts to remove the wounded from the impact area, and in order to get medical aid for the wounded in their isolated and exposed position, Chaplain Reinboth courageously volunteered to go out to where these wounded men lay and assist in evacuating them. In full view of enemy troops, the target of German snipers, and under direct fire of a German 88 pounding into the area, Chaplain Reinboth went to the aid of these wounded men in utter disregard for his own safety.

"In spite of the furious mortar fire and with shells landing within fifteen yards from him, shell fragments cutting the air about him from all sides, this gallant Chaplain stuck with the task he had begun. Fully exposed at all times, Chaplain Reinboth moved about locating the wounded and separating them from the dead, giving emergency medical treatment, assisting in littering them to loading points and giving reassurance to the terror stricken casualties.

"Many more were wounded and killed while Chaplain Reinboth continued his work gallantly disregarding the danger to which he was exposed. His magnificent action at the risk of his life gave immediate aid to the severely wounded and was an inspiration to all the men who know of his deed."

Having better than 250 days of combat time on the Fifth Army Front in Italy, Chaplain Reinboth has spent every day with one of his front-line companies or battalions, caring for the spiritual needs of the fighting men and helping them in every possible way.

"I have never met a man at the front who openly disclaimed religion or God," he said. "Men look to the Lord for satisfaction, guidance, and consolation in times of need. And never in their lives will they find a greater need for the Lord's guidance than in combat with the enemy."

With the 88th "Blue Devil" Infantry Division since its activation in July, 1942, the Lutheran chaplain has made various observations concerning the spiritual life and needs of the fighting man.

Men who have seen combat have a different outlook on religion than those who have not been under the terrific strain of enemy fire. Facing death at every turn, he observed, they look at religion with a more serious determination, feeling that it is necessary and certainly worth while. Men who have been under fire realize the value of spiritual satisfaction and look to the chaplain for that satisfaction, he declared.

Evidence of how some men react came to light after they have been wounded, Reinboth pointed out. Everything they have done wrong seems to pop into their minds, and they want to tell it to the chaplain. Thus, during a drive the chaplain usually remains with the medical aid men, helping them and at the same time talking to the wounded and comforting them as much as possible.

Chaplain Reinboth played the part of the "picture poster" chaplain last July 13 when his 2d Battalion suffered innumerable casualties on "Bloody Knob," near Volterra.

Accompanying a doctor and an aid man, Reinboth went forward into a hail of mortar, artillery, and small arms fire, directly under enemy observation, to evacuate the wounded.

Gathering the wounded and evacuating them by jeep as soon as possible, Chaplain Reinboth went from foxhole to foxhole while waiting for the return of the vehicle, talking to the men, making them as comfortable as possible and praying for and with them. He remained under the fire until the last man was evacuated. As the Krauts threw airbursts overhead, Reinboth continued to pray for men of all faiths.

Gathering men for services at the front is not approved by Chaplain Reinboth, because, as he says, "There is no need to tempt the Lord." However, when a building can be found or when an outfit is in a static position, he tries to hold regular services for the men. It is his policy to hold services for as many men as possible just before an attack.

Being a combat chaplain is not the only work of the foxhole minister. It is a policy that within 48 hours after it has been verified that a man has been killed in action, the chaplain will write a letter to his next of kin, notifying them of the death and verifying the report. If the recipient replies and requests further details, the chaplain answers with the information he is able to obtain.

He has written as many as four letters to the wives or parents of one man killed in combat.

To the 1,200 Christmas cards Reinboth sent to men in the hospitals still in this theater, better than a tenth replied, thanking the chaplain for his thoughtfulness.

One, typical of letters received, read: "I'll pray for you and the men always, will never forget you for what you have done for me. I have often thought of your kindness and the way you tucked me in when the men carried me off the mountain. You made me feel at ease in my hour of need."

Men injured in combat usually do not feel they have been mistreated, Reinboth opined, and they do not feel bitter toward religion or toward their comrades. However, most maintain a bitter attitude toward the Germans, and some want to go after them again.

Effects of the chaplain's work is felt at home as much as it is on the battlefield. Wives and parents have come to realize that the chaplain is the most feasible medium for obtaining information concerning their loved ones killed or wounded. Naturally folks at home hesitate to believe their son or husband is killed or wounded.

A letter written by Reinboth concerning a doughboy he knew quite well did much to relieve the wife of the soldier.

She wrote back, "When I received the notice of his death, I could not believe it. He was always so thoughtful and doing things for others. I can truthfully say that when I received word, I was very bitter. To me it did not seem fair that his life should be taken. He had so many things to look forward to. Since your letter arrived, it has shown me the true light. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for showing me the way. I can promise that our son shall live to carry on the plans that his brave father made."

Reinboth wrote three other letters in corresponding with the grief-stricken wife.

Last spring Chaplain Reinboth startled parts of the world and even drew comment in the British Parliament, because he presented an Easter service to the 349th and also addressed the Nazi soldiers in their own language by way of a loud-speaker set up on the front.

The doughboys could not go to a rear area for their Easter service; so Reinboth took it to them while they remained in their foxholes. The Catholic and the other Protestant chaplains also preached to the infantrymen. The loud-speakers carried the voices to our boys and to the enemy troops.

A Lincoln, Nebr., newspaper carried the following detailed account of this Easter service, April 14, 1944:

"Happy Easter. As an American chaplain I greet Protestants and Catholics of the German army. Should not all Christendom be jubilant this day? Should not all people rejoice — now that Christ died and rose again for all men — for Germans and Americans alike — therefore I wish you also today in the name of my soldiers a happy Easter."

With these words opening a religious service broadcast to Nazi troops and Allied doughboys on the Cassino front in Italy Easter morning, Chaplain Oscar H. Reinboth of Seward brought comfort to thousands of men far from home. And to himself Chaplain Reinboth brought world-wide attention and commendation.

The 30-year-old Nebraska man, a native of Hebron, served Holy Cross Lutheran Church at Goehner, southwest of Seward, from August, 1938, until he joined the Army in 1942. His parents, wife, and three children are now at Seward for the duration.

SERVICE UNINTERRUPTED

Thousands of American soldiers knelt in foxholes within 400 yards of German infantry in the spectacular service, which was reported by an Associated Press correspondent and discussed by numerous radio and newspaper commentators.

The idea of sharing the front-line service with the Germans originated with the regimental commander and three chaplains, including Chaplain Reinboth. Not a single shell fell in the immediate sector that Sunday during nearly two hours of Protestant and Catholic services that began shortly after sunrise.

WINS COMMENDATION

Typical of the approval with which Chaplain Reinboth's opening message was accepted throughout the United States was a statement in the column of David Lawrence, whose syndicated writing appears in many papers.

"There was something courageous and sincere about that simple statement of faith in the midst of an atmosphere of bloodshed and conflict," Lawrence wrote April 12. "It is the fine determination of Chaplain Reinboth to maintain his faith and to express the spirit of brotherly love even for the enemy which makes his expression a notable one. . . . When an American chaplain reminds the soldiers of an enemy country that Easter services are for them as well as for Americans, he is only saying that in the abstract sense the American people have no hate for another people as such and that in his opinion Christianity offers a connecting link between peoples of like belief."

TELLS OF MEMORIAL SERVICE

In a letter to his wife, written March 22, the Nebraska chaplain described another usual day. "We held memorial services for the men who have lost their lives out of our outfit so far. There were 450 present at the service," he wrote. "Just as we were bowing our heads for five minutes of silence after taps had been sounded, waiting for church call, suddenly we heard a terrific noise right above us. . . . A German plane shot over at tree-top height. All 450 men hit the ground. How thankful we were that they didn't drop a bomb, or they could have killed a large number of men."

At that service, "dedicated to the memory of those who gave their lives for liberty, justice, and our rights as free men," Chaplain Reinboth told his wife he preached on Rev. 2:17, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and will give him a white stone and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it." The chaplain wrote, "Even though no imposing stone marks their graveyard in a beautiful cemetery, yet — and how much better this is — for them that 'overcome' God gives a stone in heaven."

Chaplain Reinboth graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, in June, 1938, where he majored in languages and religion. In August, 1938, he was called as pastor of the Holy Cross Lutheran Church of Goehner. While there, he also studied at the University of Nebraska.

In April, 1942, he went into the Army as a chaplain, entering Chaplains' School at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. From there he was assigned to Camp Gruber, Okla., for a year, where among his other duties as a chaplain at the camp, he was assigned to preach in German to the German prisoners.

At Camp Gruber he was given his captaincy after becoming regimental chaplain. From there he went on maneuvers with the outfit and in September, 1943, was stationed at Fort Sam Houston, Tex. By Christmas, 1943, he had landed at Oran, Africa, and from there was sent to Italy.

Reinboth, who had not thought much about coming into the service until he received a bulletin from the Chaplains' Corps, is the father of three children, the eldest four years of age.

An estimate of Chaplain Reinboth's activities can be gained from his remarks in an article contributed to *The Lutheran Chaplain* entitled

"BUILDING A 'CONGREGATION' IN THE ARMY"

"'Chaplain, I want to be baptized.'

"Two months ago a company commander approached me after the Sunday morning service with that plea. Instructions were begun in the rudiments of the Christian religion on the same day. Wednesday evening a large representation of Company F was present to see the beloved C. C. receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

"Saturday we left for the front.

"Today I wrote his parents: 'Your son is dead.'

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Captain Thornton was only one of the men whom I had been privileged to baptize and who have since heard Christ proclaim, 'Enter into the joy of thy Lord.' By the Word and Sacrament a congregation is built.

"Is it difficult to build a 'congregation' in the Army? Fortunately, in my case it would hardly be incorrect to call the group which attends church services a congregation in the real sense of the word. I have been favored by God in being permitted to serve the same unit since June, 1942. Consequently, it has been possible, at least in a measure, to mold the Protestant men into a group that somewhat resembles a congregation. This has its difficulties. The oneness of faith so wholesomely present in a Lutheran congregation is lacking here. True, I have a congregation within a 'congregation,' my little flock of Lutherans in the Division. But their number is small. The bulk of my work centers about the men who come from every known Protestant denomination. Is it possible, then, to build up good church attendance among these men?

Two Categories

"As in civilian life, so in the Army, our work is divided into two categories: the Divine Service and Personal Ministry. When a pastor of our Church in New York City is asked to preach in San Francisco, he knows the customs of that congregation. But that is not the case in the military. In every gathering there will be men who come from a church that is highly liturgical. Others will be present who have never even heard the word 'liturgy.'

Chaplain Frederick A. Wiese Conducts Services During a Lull in the Fighting

Chapel on Leyte Island: Hymns are Played on the Tower Chimes Before Services. F. L. Von Husen, Chaplain

Preach the Word

"How, then, conduct the service to satisfy everyone? First of all, one must remember that the sermon is the high point of every divine service. No true minister of God dare register any doubt in approaching that subject. Preach the Word. Preach the Law in all its severity and the Gospel in the full measure of its comforting sweetness. There will be a few in the crowd who consider that foolishness, but I thank God that the majority of the Protestants love to hear real Gospel preaching.

Liturgy

"From my experience of the past I found a compromise necessary for the liturgical part of the service. If one has no liturgy at all, the high churchmen will feel there is something lacking. On the other hand, when one uses the full Lutheran liturgy, many Protestants, not understanding it, will be offended. Therefore it has been my policy to use responsive readings, the Apostles' Creed and prayers spoken in unison. Both groups are well pleased. In fact, many a soldier who has been unaccustomed to liturgy has remarked, 'Chaplain, that adds something to the service.' I find that in the Army, especially if you plan every service well, have system and organization, the men go for it. By all means avoid long sermons and long, drawn-out services. To my delight, officers and men alike attend these services well.

Personal Ministry

"On the other hand, personal ministry takes on a new significance in the Army. Soldiers want their chaplain to be a real man. If they hike 20 miles, he should be able to make 21. If they can do with one canteen of water a day, the chaplain should have some left over when day is done. No other group of men can so readily see through a person as the soldiers. They act natural no matter who is around. They despise a false front.

Example of the Chaplain

"This doesn't mean that a chaplain must stoop to vulgarity or wink at 'regimental sin.' On the contrary, while the chaplain walks, talks, eats, and sleeps with his men, he has a wonderful opportunity to set a high ideal for the soldiers he serves. The men of my regiment will rebuke a recruit when he curses in my presence. The other day I had a most thrilling experience. While taking a shower with a large group of men, a drunken stranger made my face and neck turn red with horrible and abusive language. A number of my men were present. They dealt with the offender in no uncertain terms. Always, in a kind way, I have called my men on their language, showing no preference to rank. The Colonel has me attend all staff meetings, for, he says, 'Your presence reminds us to guard our tongue.'

When Men Are Dying

"The Lutheran Church has used for its motto in this war: 'They shall not march alone.' For a successful ministry this must be true, especially at the front. While we were on maneuvers in North Africa, it was my policy never to miss a problem, day or night. Often I froze miserably, but I always remembered 'my men have to do it.' The same applies in actual combat. When men are dying, they have a right to expect a spiritual adviser near by. Of course, it is foolish for a chaplain to be in the front-line trenches where he draws fire and has no chance to do good. My place is at the battalion aid station, where the men are brought when wounded. Every man is seen and spoken to while the medics fix him up. If the casualties are heavy and help is short, I hold the bottle of plasma, bandage his wounds, and speak to him if he is conscious.

"Here is a man who wants to pray; there lies one who has souvenirs he wants to give to the chaplain for safekeeping. Another gives his mother's address and pleads, 'Please write her.'

"A British chap told me one night — he was very seriously wounded – 'Chaplain, I haven't been in church in nine years. Pray the Lord's Prayer.'

"A youngster of 19 had his foot blown off by a Shuh mine. Lately he had been negligent in his church attendance and careless in his speech. He was restless and wanted to confess his sins. I asked to be left alone with him for a minute. Soon he felt better.

"A German captain was told he probably would die. He needed to straighten his account with God, he said. When he left on a 36-hour litter journey, he was weak physically but strong spiritually.

"Thus it goes on, day and night – 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 days in a row. Sure, it's fatiguing, but think of the poor infrantrymen!

The Men Turn Out

"And, best of all, it brings results. When we get into a rest area and church is announced, the men turn out. You've gone all the way with them. Now they'll come your way. When the services are completed, I usually speak to them informally for several minutes. Often I say, 'We've heard again the way of salvation. God says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Many of you aren't baptized. Give me your name, and we'll talk it over.' Sometimes one announces himself; on other occasions six – and I have had as high as 14. We schedule a meeting, and instructions begin. The length of the instruction depends on the time available. Naturally, when we are about to go into battle, I baptize them even after only an hour of instruction, provided they have the faith of the Eunuch of Ethiopia.

"Thou Art With Me"

"Thus the congregation is built and continues to grow. It means work, hard work. But it pays dividends for the Kingdom of God. Unfortunately, we are not always as industrious and as thorough as God wants us to be, for we are sinful human beings. Nonetheless, in spite of our weaknesses, God's strength shines forth in His Word, preached in public and in private. By means of pure preaching and conscientious ministry it is possible to build up a Christian congregation in the Army. What a comfort to Mrs. Thornton and other mothers that their sons did not march the last leg of their journey alone. God is with these men. It's up to us chaplains to teach them, to guide, to rebuke, and to comfort them. 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.'"

"Christmas 1944"

A vivid description of Christmas on the Italian front follows:

"Christmas is past. In one way it was a most disappointing festival. On the other hand, it was the most fascinating holiday we've ever been privileged to experience. We were unfortunate in spending both Thanksgiving and Christmas on the Lines. The former we were able to observe in a measure by setting our own date. Christmas had to be celebrated on the Lines. We had services on the highest peaks of the Apennines. It was glorious! Almost a foot of snow lay white and glossy. Hundreds of men joined in singing the carols of the centuries. At one place we had a Christmas tree outdoors lighted by a jeep battery. Another service was held in a hospital ward tent which had been issued to us for the occasion. There, too, we had a Christmas tree and a beautifully decorated improvised altar. The crowd was so large that we had to take up the sides of the tent to make room. Christmas Eve we caroled in the Reserve Areas. Through it all the Lord preserved us graciously. No shells fell in the areas in which our services were conducted. We always breathe a sigh of relief when a service has reached its conclusion and the men have all dispersed. All in all, even though one of my battalions was in position and another immediately behind it, we can thank God for a successful season. Every man in the regiment had an opportunity to attend a service in the Christmas Week, to hear the Gospel of the Christ Child. That, after all, is the main purpose of our Christmas celebrations."

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"Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land"

A MODERN CIRCUIT RIDER

Edward J. Kroencke

Covering some 60,000 miles last year by plane, directing and supervising the activities of some 300 or more chaplains in the South Pacific area as Chief Chaplain for two years, Chaplain (Col.) Edward J. Kroencke has proved himself to be a modern circuit-riding pastor.

VETERAN, WORLD WAR I

The Colonel is a veteran of World War I and is one of the few Missouri Synod chaplains who has seen line service both as a soldier in the ranks and as a commissioned officer.

He was a member of the Infantry in 1918 and served with the 107th Ohio National Guard for six years as a private, cook, corporal, 1st sergeant, 2d and 1st lieutenant. In fact, the chaplain says he has been practically everything but a bugler!

PEACETIME CHAPLAIN

His chaplaincy experience has been considerable: Chaplain in the Reserve Corps, 1934 and 1935, and Chaplain with the 258th Field Artillery, New York National Guard, 1936 to 1941.

He was with this regiment at the time it was inducted into Federal Service on Feb. 3, 1941.

He assumed the duties of Chaplain with the 101st Cavalry in January, 1942, and was promoted to the rank of Major on Feb. 1, 1942. On Aug. 1, 1942, he was sent overseas. He was made a full Colonel on May 6, 1944, and shortly thereafter received commendation from Lt.-Gen. Millard F. Harmon, in which he was cited for his inspiring guidance and stimulating performance of duty, which are invaluable in fostering and developing the spiritual and moral strength of troops in the South Pacific.

COMMENDATION

The commendation, received on June 1, 1944, reads in part:

"Sparing no effort to meet the vital spiritual demands which constitute an integral part of discipline and *esprit de corps,* you have displayed brilliantly and imbued in your associates an appreciation of the responsibilities involved in ministering to the spiritual needs of soldiers under the tension of combat, the strain of isolation, and the monotony of rear area bases.

"In addition to your administrative duties, you have provided the highest type of religious guidance and moral counsel as chaplain for Protestant personnel in the theater headquarters. Your understanding and wisdom in this period from October 8, 1942, to June 1, 1944, have been a source of profound inspiration to the officers and men with whom you so outstandingly and nobly served."

BROADCASTS OVER WORLD-WIDE RADIO HOOKUP

Last Oct. 24, Col. Kroencke broadcast over a world-wide hookup from New Caledonia. During this initial broadcast from that country the chaplain made an appeal for more cheerful mail from the folks back home to the men in service.

Throughout his entire two years in the South Pacific Area he has maintained his love for missions and has ardently put forth every effort to continue the missionary work he so zealously pursued while in the United States.

TROOPS BUILD CHAPELS

Not long after the arrival of the original task force in the restless, doubtful days of 1942, American troops on the island began an extensive program of religious activities.

Like their forefathers in a New World, troops built their own houses of worship. Army chapels were as indispensable as mess halls. But these – the improvised shelters of creative, ingenious soldiers – were no custom-built structures.

Many of them were native type. Typical of the South Pacific, they were thatched-roof, grass-walled buildings. Their pews were logs and scrap lumber.

As military successes in the South Pacific developed, troops in the rear areas tightened their grip on a self-styled American way of life, including a fuller religious program.

Chapels were improved. Well-constructed buildings took the place of temporary native-style houses of worship. Few areas on the island were without adequate worship facilities. Some chapels later were equipped with electric organs.

SERVICE MEN SUPPORT MISSION WORK

The chaplain wrote to his wife, who lives in Teaneck, N. J., in a letter dated June 12, 1944:

"Here is a story for your Missionary Society. In the two Sunday services held at the Temple at Noumea, New Caledonia, for service men only, these men have supported entirely the mission work in New Caledonia and the adjacent Loyalty Islands, and have paid two thirds of the cost of building a parish house in Noumea in 1942. They are doing even better in 1944. All this is entirely unsolicited. We just take up an offering at each service."

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Increased facilities produced an accentuated program of worship, exemplified in the following one-month summary:

More than 30,000 soldiers attended 319 Sunday services on the island in April, 1944. Their attendance at 245 midweek services totaled 3,649. More than 1,000 partook of Holy Communion.

Chaplains, in the meantime, conducted 2,825 personal interviews. They found time for more than 14,000 hospital contacts, 230 guardhouse interviews, and 3,000 official miscellaneous tasks.

SOLDIERS CONTRIBUTE $19,000 TO MISSIONS

Mission money has been going out from this island into all the world. There is scarcely a field of missions which has not profited from the $19,000 which soldiers here have contributed.

The people of this island have an educational building nearing completion second to none any place. Seventy-five per cent of its cost was paid for by Christian men in the Army of the United States of America.

Offerings of one particular place of worship are large enough to finance all mission work on this island and in addition keep the work going on three adjacent islands.

Those chaplains who live with soldiers find that many of them not only have "foxhole religion," but a faith that makes them say, "Thy Kingdom come, O God" — and then set to work, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to make it a reality in this present day.

PLANS NEW CHAPEL

In a recent letter to his wife, the chaplain said: "We have been working on plans for a chapel. It will stand up on a hill and be seen by all the ships, as they come and go, and overlook the camp. But we must extend it to greater capacity. Have changed the time of service to 9:30 instead of 8:00 in the morning. Lately attendance has grown, and yesterday we had

350 in the service – so the chapel must seat at least 400; I am going to ask for $500. The evening service attendance also reached almost 300."

NEVER BEFORE SO PRIVILEGED

"Though I pray the war will soon be over," he says, "in the meantime I am preaching the Word at every opportunity. Never before have I been so privileged to serve the Master as in these days. You should be at one of our services and hear the singing! I can feel the power of the Holy Spirit among the men as we worship together."

MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS

On Memorial Day of this year Chaplain Kroencke was asked by Gen. Harmon to deliver an address to the men in the South Pacific. This message has been broadcast in the South Pacific and used by the "Morale Services" throughout this area. The address, which follows, is a strong re-affirmation for men all over the South Pacific as to the importance and necessity of their jobs.

Our Task

"Many of you men have said to me and to each other, 'I wish I were home.' It is only natural that you and I, separated from our loved ones, should desire to be with them. In fact, it would be abnormal for us not to miss them deeply and to be increasingly anxious, the longer that we are here, to return to them. I take it, however, that when we say, 'I wish I were home,' we are merely expressing our love and affection for those who are dear to us. If there is more involved in this statement, I am sure that we have not given thought as to just why we are here.

Why We Are Here

"Here we find ourselves on a small island in the Pacific. There is no particular attraction for us to this land, and to us, personally, it has no intrinsic value. But have you ever truly thought, have you ever followed through on the idea of just why we are here and what the occupation of this territory means to each one of us individually?

"You and I came out here to occupy these islands to prevent the Jap from coming in here. If we had not done so, the Jap would have continued coming down, would have taken this island, would have taken the fair land of New Zealand, and would have taken other islands of the Pacific, and would then have been in a position to invade our own beloved country.

"Do you realize what that would have meant, not just to our country as a whole, but to our loved ones particularly?

For Our Loved Ones

"You have seen pictures of what the bombing of London has meant to that city, and you have heard of the large numbers that were slain in that dreadful experience. You know what happened to the people in Rotterdam; you've heard stories of Shanghai; you know the story of Manila, Bataan, and Corregidor. If you and I were with our people today, it would mean that the Jap also would be in America; that he would be ravaging our cities; that he would be destroying our land; that our wives, mothers, sweethearts, children would be in danger of capture, and we would be fighting to retain our homes. The fact that you and I are here is due to the planning wisdom of those who have the conduct of this war, and just the fact that you and I are here means that our wives, our mothers, our sweethearts, our children, our neighbors, and our friends are living safely at home; that the ravages of war are not taking their toll in San Francisco, Los Angeles, or in Denver or Chicago; that bombs are not falling on Cincinnati, or Pittsburgh, or New York. I am not painting an impossible picture; I am stating an absolute fact. That could have happened; in fact, it almost did happen. But our country, under God's help, was able to send men out here to meet the Jap, and you and I are here today to prevent him from entering our country; and I know that you and I love our country, represented individually by our loved ones — our wives, mothers, sweethearts, children, neighbors, and friends.

"I am sure that if we will think along those lines, we will not look upon our remaining in this area as a hardship, but as a crusade and as a service for them. In fact, I am sure that all of us will be willing to remain here for a much longer period of time, as we realize that thereby we keep harm away from our family's and from our neighbor's door.

Someone Else in Your Place?

"Of course, we can say that there are others who are at home, who have remained there while we are here; which is true. However, could you let someone else — would you be willing to allow someone else — defend your home? Would you let someone else do it if the Jap were outside your city?

"Under God's blessing he is not there. And it is your privilege and my privilege to be here because God has given to us the health and the strength to be called upon to serve our country in this greater measure. If we shall approach our living here in this way, I am sure our thoughts will be different. If we consider that in being here we defend our homes, that we bring peace and blessing to our loved ones, our attitude will surely be different.

Indispensable Jobs

"And how shall we look upon the immediate task we are doing? You and I find ourselves in jobs that in many instances are the same day after day. But those jobs must be performed. In this comparative safety we must direct the efforts of those up forward. We must see that they receive the ammunition, the armament, the food to carry on. If this mighty machine which has been set up here does not carry on in its great effort, the man who is right up there on the front fighting the Jap cannot continue, and the entire cause is lost. A man who carries an important paper from the desk of one officer and faithfully delivers that paper into another officer's hands so that a particular job can be carried forward, is serving just as surely, and doing his part in the defense of his country, as are other men. The man who mops the kitchen floor and thereby keeps this personnel healthy, enabling the men to function day after day, is doing his God-appointed task in the conduct of this war. No one will write a romantic story about us; no one will proclaim in glorious word the simple necessary tasks we perform; but every job must be done. If we will face it squarely, we will realize that this is our God-appointed task in this tremendous undertaking, combating the tremendous danger that faces us. Other men have been called upon for even greater sacrifices. God in heaven has designated us for our particular function. All of us, if we truly love our people, truly love our nation, if we think along these lines, will be willing even to lay down our lives if we know that thereby our loved ones will be safe, that they may spend the following years in freedom and in safety.

Government of the People

"And some men have done just that.

"You and I are today gathered to do them honor; to remind ourselves of the tremendous sacrifices that they made; to remind ourselves of the reason why they died; to re-dedicate our lives to the unfinished task which those who have died have thus far so nobly advanced; to insure that our loved ones shall live in safety and comfort; to insure the future of our children, to insure that our nation shall continue as a great nation, and that its liberty shall continue to be our privilege.

"We, therefore, this day re-dedicate ourselves to the task of bringing this war to a successful conclusion in order to insure freedom as the heritage of all peoples of the earth, so that 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.'"

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On the Western Front

COMBAT CHAPLAIN'S DIARY

Gerhard J. C. Gerike

"DECEMBER 17. The day after, things began popping in Luxembourg. And yet services went on. Everybody and everything was in a rush. Vehicles and men were going hither and yon. What chance for an attendance? Didn't seem too promising, since rear echelon men also were being sent into the lines, and naturally combat units were in the lines. But the full schedule was carried out, and the attendance was encouraging.

"About December 18 or 19 I was to lead a part of a unit of medics to their new location. This group had stayed behind when the rest moved out, in order to be able to treat any wounded brought in by ambulance drivers who had not been informed of the move. Ten o'clock was moving time, but about 0945 three ambulances came in with American and enemy wounded. After they had been treated, the convoy moved out. The new destination was reached without any difficulty, except for trying to get around wagons, carts, bicycles, baby carriages loaded with sundry articles. One rather interesting and amusing experience took place with regard to one of the men brought in just before we left. As he was carried in, the remark was made that he was a serious case. He was wrapped from head to foot in a blanket. The medical officer looked at the litter and decided it was too late. When, lo and behold, the man opened his eyes. To the question 'Where are you hit?' he responded, 'I'm not hit, only sick and cold.' He was very much alive, and everybody rejoiced over the fact.

"Moves were made so rapidly and so often that there is a little blur surrounding all of it. On the 23d another move was made somewhere in France. It was a bitter cold move, made in the very late evening and night. Just after having closed in the new area and having found places to sleep, 'Bed-check-Charlie' put in his appearance and dropped three 'eggs' just to let us know the war was still on. As though any of us needed a reminder.

"December 24. And what plans had been made for its observance back in Luxembourg! Some of the men had made the remark in November already, that in all their Army career they'd never had a real chance to celebrate Christmas. We were going to do something about that. Services; carol singing, both by Army personnel and the local population; invitations into the homes of the local people. But here it was December 24. We weren't in Luxembourg. A volcano had erupted right in our midst. Friends had been slaughtered. Units had been surrounded. Combat commands had been holding north, center, and south sectors, grimly holding on until it was Christmas. One thought of officers and men who had shown so much co-operation in arranging church services, but who were no longer amongst the living. And yet it was Christmas, 'Christmas Everywhere.' Spirits were low, but spirits were seeking just what Christmas proclaimed, 'The Christ Child, the Savior of all.' The outer nonessentials had been stripped from our celebration, but the essential was still there, the Gospel of forgiveness. Two services were held on Christmas Eve, one on the stage in a school building; and one in a stable of an old French barracks. Straw was in evidence, for men were sleeping on it. What a comparison!

"December 25. Three more services were held. Since that time a number of more moves have been made. My present schedule calls for six services on Sunday at 0900, 1000, 1100, 1400, 1500, 1600. (Which, to say the least, leave this chaplain feeling like something that went through a wash machine wringer. Must be because he isn't rugged enough.) The weekday schedule calls for two regular services, with some extra ones developing by holding Lutheran Communion services, and an occasional civilian service.

"The stories of brutality one hears from both military and civilian personnel are unbelievable and yet seem supported by enough evidence to warrant belief.

"People are surprised at the amount of 'religion' displayed by Americans. (I wish it were really true!) Speaking about one of my services, where I have an attendance of around 100–150 every Sunday, they marvel at the way the boys drift in from all corners. And then the shocked statement: 'Who of the age of 20 goes to services here?' Youth will present the great problem over here, as it will in America.

"At this same place we have services in a Protestant church. While all heads were bowed in prayer, he (the dog) heard an unusual noise of someone walking around and promptly proceeded to issue a warning. One exasperated soldier took his hymnal and made a wild heave (it was wild, he missed him) at the dog. It made the dog reconsider a bit, but after the conclusion one whimpering pup was led from the services by one determined soldier.

"The services during the Lenten season will center about the theme of the suffering and death of our Lord to secure our redemption. Midweek services are not possible under the present schedule.

"May the Lord have mercy upon us all and end the conflict which is causing so much misery to people of all nations; above all, may people turn to the Lord as their only hope and stay in this world and in the next."

REAL DESIRE FOR THE WORD

Ernst J. C. Jehn

CHAPLAIN ERNST J. C. JEHN came to the chaplaincy from Racine, Wis., after having served for a time at Trinity Lutheran Church of Milwaukee and then at a number of mission stations in that city. While recuperating after a severe attack of pneumonia, the chaplain gave the following account:

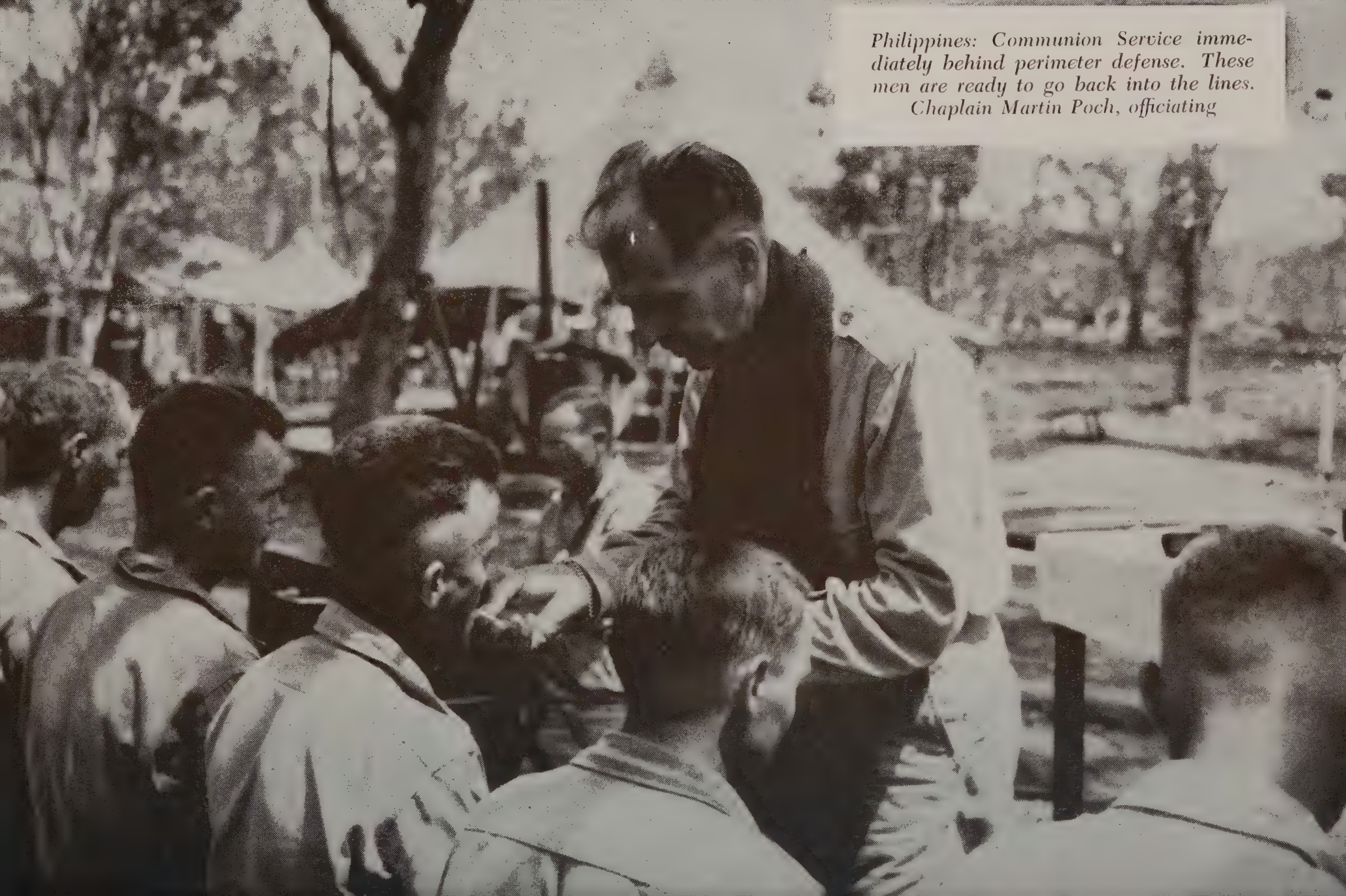
"During the month I was able to secure an afternoon hour at the local Protestant (Lutheran) church for a regular Sunday afternoon Lutheran Communion Service. With the only publicity a notice in the Church Service Section of the *Stars and Stripes* on Saturdays, I have conducted a Lutheran Communion Service every Sunday afternoon during February, with the results you see on my monthly report.

"But something the report does not show, and that is the weather, the condition of the roads, the temperature, and the distance traveled by many communicants. Nor does it show the gratitude and peace which the reception of the Sacrament brought into the hearts and souls of these servants of Christ Jesus.

"The first Sunday I had several communicants who had driven over icy roads in an open-air jeep more than two and one-half hours, covering some thirty-five miles, to receive the Sacrament. The third Sunday I had two nurses and one officer with five enlisted men who traveled more than fifty miles, and one officer who came about sixty-five miles to the service. All these people spent more than three hours (one way) to receive the Sacrament. They traveled not in a soft-cushioned, enclosed, heated sedan, but in a truck or a jeep. That's what I call our Service Personnel's answer to the Savior's loyalty question 'Lovest thou Me?'

"The minister of the local church has taken a special interest in me. I'm the first chaplain to come to his attention — and there

Communion on the North African Desert. Arnold E. Bertram, Chaplain



Philippines: Communion Service immediately behind perimeter defense. These men are ready to go back into the lines. Chaplain Martin Poch, officiating have been many, including the Army chaplain – who could 'handle' the German language. So I visit with him one evening per week, and as a reward I have an hour in the morning for the General Communion Service. By the way, after my 3 P. M. service I go to the minister's house for coffee and coffee cake.

"The church is well preserved and in excellent repair. It seats about 800 and has a nice pipe organ. Here, too, I've hit it lucky; the minister's daughter plays the organ and, since I have no organist, has played for all of my services. Who said the professor at our Milwaukee Concordia didn't know what he was doing when he insisted on my learning German?"

IN A HAYLOFT

Frederick A. Graef

Chaplain frederick alvin graef was born in Rochester, N. Y., attended the Concordia Collegiate Institute at Bronxville, N. Y., and was graduated in the year 1931 from the Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. His first congregation was located at Momence, Ill. After this he served in the State of Florida, and left for the chaplaincy from Pascagoula, Miss. His experiences in France are set forth in this very interesting story.

Above the voice of the chaplain could be heard the barnyard noises below: the old sow grunting satisfaction with her farrow; cowbells ringing; chickens cackling; the rooster crowing.

It happened one Sunday morning on maneuvers – when the rain was falling hard.

Where was our chaplain to hold his service? Mess tents were occupied. The major's tent was too small. No homes were available.

At 6 A. M. Chaplain Frederick A. Graef climbed into a jeep and started to search the countryside. A barn came into view. The chaplain went inside.

The center portion of the barn contained a hayrack. The north section housed a pigsty and corncrib. Remaining space was leased to the cattle.

Then the chaplain spotted the hayloft. Two soldiers were there, sleeping peacefully, and chickens scratched in the hay. But the loft was dry.

Pastor Graef hastened to his tent — runners were dispatched to all companies to announce services — equipment was packed into the jeep — and the clergyman returned to the loft.

While the clerk and his assistant carried equipment up the ladder, the chaplain scattered hay on the floor. Two boxes were set up, a blanket thrown across — and the hastily constructed altar was ready.

As the organ pealed forth indicating location of the "chapel," heads began to pop up the ladder one by one. Soldiers stepped into the newly strewn hay, picked up hymnals, and found a place to sit.

A hymn was sung. But the organ was damp, and for every four notes played, twelve to fifteen sounded.

Then came the sermon and the rest of the service, with the chaplain preaching on the topic "God Prevails" — to the accompaniment of the noises described above.

"It was rugged, but gratifying," Pastor Graef writes, "and the attendance was excellent."

D DAY REFLECTIONS

R. C. Prohl

"I RECALL A COMMUNION SERVICE aboard an Army transport lying in a bay off England. As men are kneeling before me to receive the Body and the Blood of the Lord, we feel the ship rock as she weighs anchor and heads for the continent of Europe . . . and history. I pray at the close of the service that God will always be near. I see the bowed heads of the thankful men at the close of a perilous journey, unarmed men, but men as brave as any, anywhere. They are litter bearers who for five long days braved the fire of friend as well as foe to bring aid to the wounded and dying. They had returned, every man grimy with the dirt of battle, dead tired, having experienced years in days, yet untouched by instruments of destruction, to give thanks to God.

"Before me are trucks loaded with men. The men are armed with red crosses on helmets and around each arm. They are litter bearers. They are battle wise. They do not like what is before them, but they have a duty to perform, and they will do it well. In ten days or two weeks they will return; that is, God willing, most of them will return. But bursting shells do not recognize red crosses. I press a few copies of *Battlefield Prayers* * into moist hands and wish all Godspeed, and the trucks are gone. May God forgive me the streak of vanity which makes me throw out my chest and strut a bit when I think of these – my men. They have but one duty, to do their utmost, to give their lives if necessary, to nourish and preserve the lives of others. For tedious hours in the operating room, twenty-four hour shifts in the wards, over perilous stretches of road with the ambulances, while clearing the bloody battlefield, there is a devotion to duty which prompts me to whip off my helmet, bow from the hips, and say, 'Soldier, I salute you!'

"Of course, the idea of saluting these men is not original. A general started that soon after D Day, back in Normandy, when he pinned on the first medals. The first Bronze Star went to the ambulance driver who twice drove through enemy lines to deliver medical supplies and evacuate the wounded. The first Silver Star went to the sergeant who went out on the open field between American and German lines to dress the wounds of a German officer and to bring him in. A corporal went into a mine field and brought out two wounded. A private had an interesting experience. I am going to let this 'man who came back' tell his own story. 'Our litter squad was cut off from an aid station and a part of an infantry battalion. The shelling became so heavy while we were evacuating the wounded from a certain section that we thought it safer to take the injured men into a basement rather than make the long trip with each one to the aid station. Late in the afternoon a German medic opened the door and, speaking in good English, warned us that we would have to leave soon or be made prisoners. Since we could not move the wounded, we decided to stay at least through the night. Early the next morning I set out for the aid station to report our predicament. I found the station with little difficulty, but saw immediately that men there were in no position to help us. They needed help. I worked that day at the aid station. Toward evening an officer asked me if I would try to lead the walking wounded through to our lines under cover of darkness. I said I would try my best. That night we set out walking, running, crawling, helping the injured over rough spots, until we could go no further. There we fell to the ground and slept. At daybreak we were rudely awakened by soldiers, our own G. I.'s. We had made it! The men in the basement are missing in action.' "

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* Issued by the Army and Navy Commission.

WITH PATTON'S THIRD ARMY

Wm. R. Thierfelder

"TODAY I'M CRAWLING FROM FOXHOLE TO FOXHOLE, and the men just gobble up every word of encouragement. Some were reading their Bibles, others their prayer books. God bless them all. These infantrymen deserve every bit of credit they are getting and more. These G. I.'s are not quitting even though the battles are slowing down. What we are doing takes time and guts; and these men are taking God with them. Every anxious moment is filled with an earnest prayer. It is heartwarming to see the eagerness with which they devour every word of hope from Scriptures and how they put their whole soul in a song like 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus' and 'Beautiful Savior.'

"Two instances might be of interest to you. One a battle fatigue case and another a casualty with a compound fracture of both bones in the lower leg. It shows how different technique must be applied in different cases. In the latter case the man was in severe pain when he came into the station, and I knew he would have to stand still while they applied traction and put the leg in a splint to immobilize it. So I knelt down on the ground at the head of his litter and began talking to him very quietly. I took one of his hands in each of mine and told him to squeeze my hands hard whenever the pain got real bad. Then phrase by phrase I had him repeat after me the Lord's Prayer very slowly. Many times he would wince and press my hands so tightly I thought my bones would break, but by the time we finished the prayer, the leg was set, and he hardly realized it was over. He left the station all smiles and gratitude. There was no pain now that the bones were in place, and there was a great comfort for him knowing God was on his side. The battle fatigue story is another type again. The boy came in on a litter shaking so violently he could not stand up. When they brought him into the station, I told him to look around and see the men who had been injured by shells and fragments and reminded him how thankful he should be for his whole skin and sound bones. He cried loudly and said, 'I can't look.' Then I took him by the lapels of his jacket and raised him to a standing position and held him up and asked him if he were a Christian and did he believe in God's help for those who believe on Him? Then, after a few minutes' talk, tantamount to a sermonet, I told him to repeat my words, and we recited the 23d Psalm together. These things made quite an impression upon him. He had learned the Psalm, I could tell that he knew it. Recalling it to his mind now renewed his faith in God. The power of God's Word is wonderful. He helps in every need. This lad left the station on his own feet and has since returned to duty, a better soldier, and never passes anywhere near the aid station but that he stops for a few minutes' chat with me. You see, darling, God's Word is worth a lot to these men, and I am here to bring it to them. As long as there is a need, I shall do my best with God's help to bring it to them.

"In spite of the fact that we are all away from home, there still has been much to be thankful for today, Thanksgiving Day. We started the day with a service – my text was the last verse of the 105th Psalm – 'The Lord is good, His mercy everlasting.' Again at this service the Holy Ghost was with the Word. So many men mentioned the comfort of God's Word as proclaimed in the message of the sermon."

FRONT LINE DUTY

Raymond Buck

"A FEW DAYS HAVE PASSED since my last letter, and I am now with the Infantry Battalions. We are located some three miles from our regular Headquarters and living under slightly more difficult conditions than before. The men I am with now are the same men and officers whom I served during maneuvers last summer. When we came down here yesterday, they welcomed us with open arms. Today we made all the arrangements for the services on Sunday. After noon chow of C-ration, we walked to the church which we saw situated on a hill about a mile distant. After struggling up the hill we were rewarded with a most picturesque and beautiful sight. The church is another of those beautiful ancient churches with the finest stone and masonry work imaginable. But, better still, from the hill in the cemetery next to the church we could look out on the channel – a beautiful sight. After inspecting this church, which Edward III of England visited in 1346, we proceeded to the next town by foot and thumb. The towns are all very dead and quiet and all quite dirty. All the young people of both sexes are absolutely missing. You see only older people. Wherever you go around here, you see German gun emplacements, dugouts, German equipment, etc. It is said that they left this area in pretty much of a hurry, and it is hard to believe that two months ago this country was still infested with them. The town did not have much to offer except the sight of some old stone buildings; so we proceeded by thumb to the next town, which is about another mile and a half distant. Here is a very large old church with the typical flying buttress and still more beautiful stone tracery work. These churches have the most beautiful bells that you have ever heard, and they ring quite regularly during the day and evening.

"Today I held two services in separated areas, and they were both very well attended. Many of the commanding officers were present with their men. I spoke to them about the final preparation for the battle, 'Peace with God,' on the basis of Romans 5:1. From all indications the sermon was well received and the services much appreciated. The men asked for midweek services, which I shall gladly supply. The last few days I have been walking the round of the Infantry Companies, making contact with many men, especially my Lutheran men. They are all overjoyed to see the chaplain. It makes one feel good after these long months to know that the fellows appreciate what we have tried to do for them.

"We visited two of the large U. S. hospitals in a city situated near here. A number of our fellows were confined, and we visited them. The hospitals are well set up and are caring for a lot of men. Each day we see more of this country, and I must say that except for the inclement weather it is a beautiful countryside, marred only by the filthy looking villages and farms. With all this possibility for lawns and crops, I have yet to see one lawn or one field under cultivation. The houses and buildings in the villages are built right up to the dirty streets, and the farm buildings are all one long stone affair, with barn, house, chicken coop, and everything under one roof. The livestock is kept in a yard beginning at the front door and encircled by a stone wall.

"The other day we drove to Coutances, some distance away. This town has a beautiful large cathedral, built in the old Gothic tradition. It had been slightly hit and was therefore not open to anyone. In this town we found the shop of a silver and metal smith who specializes in sacramental ware and vestments. He had some of the most beautiful chalices that I have ever seen. They could not be purchased, however, without bringing an equal amount of metal with you. As far as other things are concerned, the shops have nothing. Most of them are closed, except those selling food.

"I am more than satisfied with the attendance and response at the services. Our work and presence are being appreciated more each day, and it has become a privilege and joy to work with and for these men. The services today were spread over almost one hundred square miles.

"It has been quite some time since you last heard from me, all because we have been on the move. I am writing this letter situated in a charming little room (billet) in a small French village, the name and location of which I cannot disclose to you. Great noises can be heard, and all of the staff officers are billeted in houses. I have a room complete with bed (the first I've slept in since we left the States). What is more, I have a little cook stove, which comes in handy both for heat and cooking. We have had some pretty stiff frosts, and up to last night I slept outside. Our tents would usually be covered with frost the next morning.

"I am now permitted to tell you that at first I could visit such cities as Cherbourg, Valognes, Barfleur, etc. On our more recent trip we saw more of the real, beautiful France – and it is a most beautiful country. The country on either side of Paris is something to behold, and yet it is a little run down because of the lack of manpower during the past four years. We saw some of Paris, though not the nicest parts of it. I saw the Eiffel Tower in the distance and also the towers of old Notre Dame. All along the way there were beautiful old churches, and we got to look at some of them. In this village they have a very fine church, and because all the people have been celebrating All Saints and All Souls, the church and village have been filled. The people dress very nicely, and the interior of their houses is always quite immaculate, but the streets and alleys and what passes for a front yard are quite the opposite. All this is very nice to talk about, but the evidences of death and destruction are all about. It is a very sad thing to see. All along the road we saw isolated graves and cemeteries of this war and the last – our American boys who will never again in this life return to their loved ones and the country of their birth.

"Today I visited our Infantry boys in the front lines, and that is something. Some of the men who were alive yesterday will never see America again, and there were a number of candidates for the Purple Heart. The men were glad to see us, and I was as happy to see them. Sometimes it is very difficult to equalize the ideals for which we fight with the sacrifice that these good men must make. When I looked over the territory today, I began to realize what a task is mine to keep up with only the men of the units assigned to me. I'll be having at least five services on Sunday, to say nothing of the services that must be held during the week. Further, I shall have to be out on the road and in the field from morning until night every day if I am to do my duty by these men, whose lives hang by such a fine thread. I have never felt the regard, the love, and esteem for men that fills me every time I meet and talk with a group of these fellows who now know what it's all about and still go on taking it, because they know it is the right thing to do.

"I was able to have services yesterday, the last of which was in my billet at night. This was the Lutheran Communion Service. I spent all Sunday afternoon tearing up and down roads, lanes, and paths rounding up my Lutherans. I had my room fixed up like a little chapel, and the boys came from all over – some for a good distance. All appreciated very much the opportunity once more to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

"Things have been happening here, and I have been at the 'clearing' station night and day. This morning I helped identify and bury some Germans. The weather here has grown progressively more miserable, but so far we have been able to find rooms to sleep in at night. Usually they are shattered houses in which no one is living. The best we get is a floor under a roof on which to roll our beds. There are never any windows left; so actually it is like sleeping outside, except that we have a roof over our heads and a little protection against the rain, wind, and artillery.

"We have seen many marks of war and a certain amount of the terrible devastation wrought by war, but let us keep in mind the higher ideals and principles for which we avowedly fight."

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From Africa to Germany

A SPLENDID JOB

Walter C. Daib

SON OF A PROMINENT CLERGYMAN in the northern part of the State of Wisconsin, Walter Carl Daib was born at Merrill, Wis., March 4, 1904. He attended Concordia College at Milwaukee, Wis., and entered the Concordia Theological Seminary at St. Louis, Mo., in 1923, graduating with a degree of Bachelor of Divinity in 1927. His ordination was performed by his father, the Rev. H. Daib, then President of the North Wisconsin District of the Missouri Synod. His first experience in the ministry was at St. Peter's and St. John's Congregations in Ontario, Canada, and in 1932 he accepted a call to the Trinity Lutheran Church of Brooklyn, N. Y. The Army and Navy Commission of the Lutheran Church granted ecclesiastical endorsement for the chaplaincy Oct. 25, 1940. He was ordered to active duty May 6, 1941, and was assigned to the 1st Division Artillery. During August of 1942 we find him on his way to England, where he was stationed until the invasion of Tunisia, where he was among the first chaplains of our church group to see combat duty.

Observing his devotion to duty in the African campaign, Chaplain Karl Schleede, then serving as Headquarters Chaplain of the Sixth Corps, made the following statement: "Chaplain Daib went through the whole African Campaign in the midst of it and is the only chaplain whom I have met who came through it spiritually and mentally fresh. He did the most arduous work a chaplain has to do. He is interested not in a promotion, but in serving men for his Master." In another informal account of the work over there in Africa, Corps Chaplain Schleede wrote the following under date of June 15, 1943, concerning this chaplain. "Daib has been hospitalized, because his back bothered him a little and had to get some rest. He did a splendid job in the 1st Division. Your newspapers and magazines will tell you where he has been, and your office record on his report will tell you what his General thinks of him." Our office records show nothing of the commendation of his General, because this chaplain is too reticent to speak of himself and his own accomplishments. But his record stands, and the men whom he has served have spoken of him as a self-effacing and consecrated servant of the Word.

He has permitted us to take a glimpse into his African battle diary, and we give a few highlights, which demonstrate the fury of fighting in those early days of conflict:

January 31. – Shells dropping near area, and enemy planes overhead inconvenience our service but do not interrupt it. Dinner under fire. Afternoon service at 5:30.

February 15. – Talking religion to two men, and a Junkers 88 came over for a look-see in the moonlight. Dropped three eggs at our truck moving along the road. Hit man riding next to me in leg. Got him under cover while plane came over again and strafed. To bed at ten in a truck.

March 14. – Awakened our crew. Breakfast of hotcakes with General. Set up Army and Navy Commission Altar Set on tail gate of truck. Rain came down in sheets with the service half over. All of our group, 45 men, crowded into pyramidal tent, 16 by 16, to finish service. Tried to dry out vestments on way to next station. Rain stopped long enough for service with the men there. Sat around fire drying out after service.

March 23. – Awakened at 5:30 by Long Toms. Stukas over crossroad at noon. On return to my own trench, hedge-hopping ME's with delayed action bombs almost caught me off base. Dropped into providential foxhole. Helmet nicked by earth or fragment. Ministered to three wounded. To sleep at 11:30 through constant air raids.

March 31. – Chicken dinner – someone bought a few chickens from the Arabs. Wrote out Synod's Army and Navy Commission's monthly report. Set up bedding roll under an overhanging ledge of rock. Stukas over on big raid. Woke several times during the night but felt safe under rock ledge. Application: "Rock of Ages."

April 12. – Built cross of two pine branches, marking site of Chapel. For an antependium we used a clean mattress cover. Then held Lenten devotion in "Chapel in the Wildwood."

April 30. – Much firing during night. Sat in front seat of truck next morning to prepare chaplain's report. Dive bombers came suddenly. 17 of them. After the first bomb landed, I dropped into ditch next to truck. One fragment hit windshield of truck. Another hit the driver.

May. – News of unconditional surrender on our front. Service at 6:30 A. M. Another service at 9 A. M. Dinner. Service at 12:30. Start on trip to hospitals. Cook making doughnuts. He filled the hollow centers by using a grease gun filled with jam. On to Evacuation Hospital. Saw wounded prisoners. Finally bedded down in an empty ward at 9:45.

When the invasion of Italy got under way, Chaplain Daib was assigned to the 59th Evacuation Hospital. During September, 1944, he was once more assigned to combat duty with the 36th Engineers, moving up into France.

CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY

In a letter written during October, 1944, he gave this interesting account, "I have been overseas now for something like 26 months plus and now find myself within 500 yards of the enemy-held territory. I drove with our colonel further toward the front lines and came upon one of our companies just being relieved from the front-line duties. I made arrangements with the commanding officer of the relieved company to hold a service for his outfit in the morning after the men had a chance to get dried out and slept. This is a forest warfare around here and pretty tough. This digging a foxhole isn't any good, because most of the enemy artillery hits the top of the trees and thus becomes an air burst which comes down into the foxholes unless they are covered over with a layer of logs. Usually we hold one woods, and just across the clearing the enemy holds the next woods. The chances of holding services for the company in the front lines are thus impossible."

Concerning his experiences in France, this chaplain submitted the following interesting observations:

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CHAPLAIN

"We were up an hour earlier yesterday for a very good reason, for we were on the move again. We had to pack our belongings, load our trailer, and then after breakfast strike our tent and put it on the trailer. All of this had to be done in the midst of a fairly heavy rain, and it wasn't pleasant by any means. By 8:30, however, we were on the move."

FRENCH ARE CO-OPERATIVE

"The day before, our advance parties had picked a bivouac area, but when we arrived, it was impossible to get into it with trucks on account of the rain and mud. Fortunately another unit was vacating the near-by village; so after some delay along the road, we simply took over its buildings. We had an office building but no other quarters; so on arrival another captain and I went scouting around the village. The French are quite co-operative in finding places for us to stay. After all, the Germans had been here only a few days ago after an occupation of four years, and the inhabitants were really glad to see us.

"We found two nice rooms for the officers and a house with enough rooms for about 60 enlisted men across the street. By the time we had finished this tour I was really wet, because it was still raining.

"We had time before dinner to unpack the trailer, and it was then we discovered a near disaster. These trailers are not watertight, and the rain had leaked in and collected in such quantities, that the bottom was covered, and I found that water had seeped into a box in which I carried my altar linens and books. I let the water drain out of the box, but didn't look at the extent of the damage until this morning. The books can be dried out and the linens washed.

HELMET PEWS

"Finally after dinner we could get to work. After all, it was Sunday, and I still had work to do. First we went to one battalion, which we found set up on the fields. Mercifully, it had stopped raining, and we could have our service without interference from the wet above. But first we had to walk around and notify the companies, who were bivouacked near by, and then wait until the news could circulate to give the men time to gather. My clerk forgot to take the count for the service, but my estimate was 25 in the congregation. Most of them sat on their helmets, because the ground was still wet.

"After the service we packed up in a hurry, because we still had many places to go. My map indicated that the country road we were on would eventually lead us to another main route. No one in the battalion had gone that route; so we set out to navigate on our own. At the edge of a village we met a French peasant and asked him about the road. He said he would show us if we took him along. I thought at first he was just getting himself a ride, but after he had taken us through the village and past several forks which would have been hard to describe, we were glad to have him as a guide. I doubt if we would have found the right road without his help. I'm afraid our *Merci* wasn't as appreciative as it ought to have been.

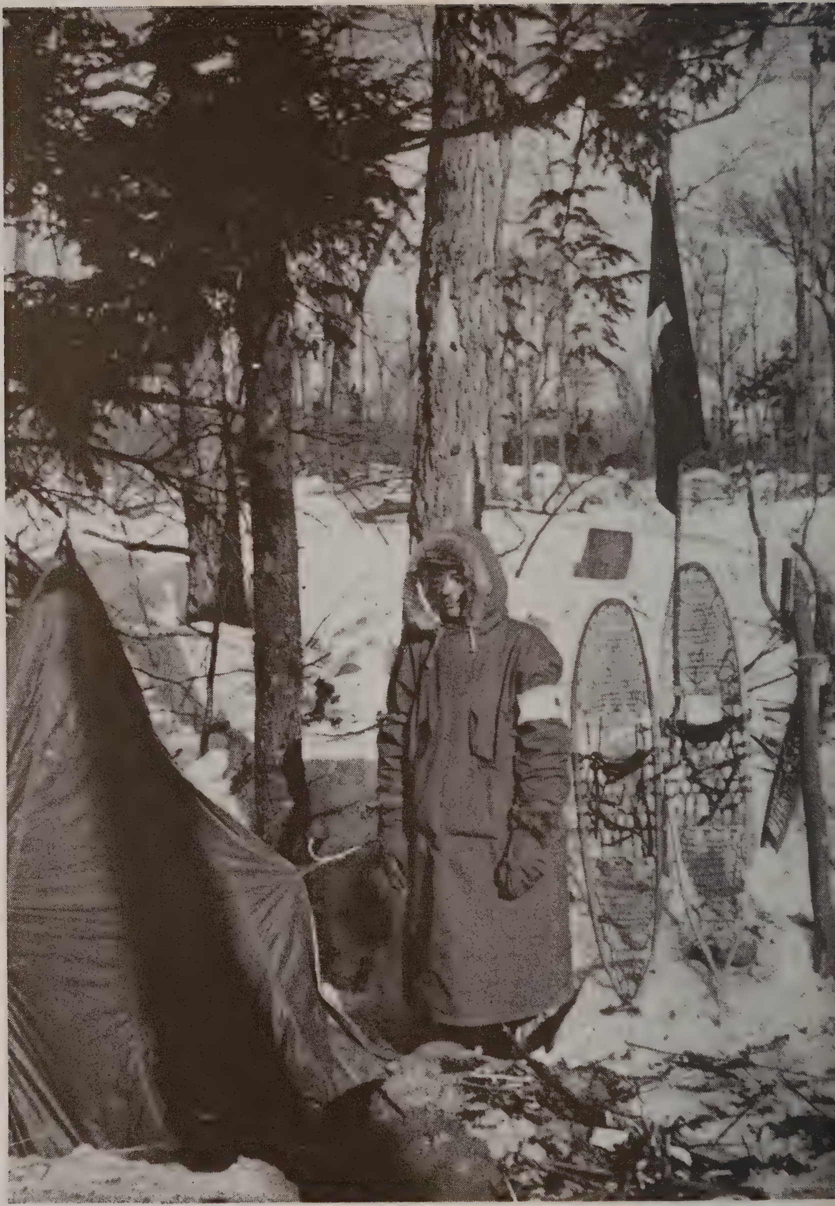
ANKLE-DEEP IN MUD

"In a large house I found an empty room for our service and then sent my clerk with the car to inform the companies that we were ready to hold services. In the meantime I walked to the nearest company. It was really muddy along the road, and I was fortunate that I had my boots on, for when I stepped off the road to let a vehicle go by, I sank down to my ankles in mud. On such short notice I really didn't expect many to attend, and so I had picked a rather small room for the service. First a contingent from one company arrived and almost filled the room. Fortunately, there was another room, just as large, with an open door between. The crowd from the second company completely filled the small room, so that I had only about two feet in front of me and the altar. When the third company arrived, they had to stay in the other room. The total attendance was 66.

HIDEAWAY IN THE WOODS

"It's a good thing I inquired about the route to the next battalion area. I was going to take a road between two towns which I knew had been freed that day, but when I spoke to the battalion executive about my route, he said there still were German snipers along the road, and so we had to go around. We found the third battalion which we visited that day in a real hideaway in the woods. They had only one company with them, since the other two were out working on jobs. On other Sundays I would have gone also to the isolated companies, but I really didn't have time yesterday. I had some supper, including some French-fried potatoes, which the officers were cooking up on a little fire of their own. Then we held our service. It

That Gun Crews may Worship, Chaplain Theo. Bornhoeft Sometimes Conducts Devotions for as Many as Sixteen Groups like This in One Day



Chaplain L. S. Imm's "Home" for Four Weeks on Winter Maneuvers. The Tent is Sunk in Four Feet of Snow wasn't very pleasant for the congregation sitting on helmets in the dripping woods, but I was surprised to see so many there. We had a total of 39 from the one company and battalion headquarters.

BROOKLYNESE GERMAN

"We had left regimental headquarters at one o'clock, and it was seven o'clock when we returned from our round trip. I still had to conduct a service for Headquarters and Service Company. Fortunately, the room assigned to me as an office was large enough to accommodate the congregation of 20, which assembled on such short notice. I had also announced a German conversation class for regimental headquarters for Sunday evenings. It was eight o'clock by the time I was ready to begin, and the class lasted until nine o'clock. We had lots of fun with the usual beginners' attempts at speaking. They were good-natured about laughing at each other's mistakes. One of the boys really brought down the house when he said *noin* instead of *nein,* and I accused him of trying to speak Brooklynese in German.

"It was nine o'clock when I was finished for the day. I still had the walk to my quarters. When I got there, the house was dark, and my flashlight was with the rest of my stuff. I finally groped around long enough to find the door and the passageway upstairs to my room.

"And so ended another Sunday in France."

CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY

"I shall try to give you the high points of our Christmas celebration. In more than one way it was unique.

"Our Christmas service for half of the regiment was held in a village church as a joint and bilingual service with the local Lutheran congregation, of which I am at present acting 'Pfarrer,' since the minister was taken along when the Germans left. The service began at 8:30 on Christmas morning with the ringing of the church bells, which here seems to be the signal for the people to leave their houses. When the bells finished ringing ten minutes later, the church was comfortably filled, with the soldiers sitting in back, solid on one side of the aisle and mixed with male civilians on the other side. The front on both sides was filled with women and children. After the Krankenschwester, who doubles as organist, had played Bach's Chorale Prelude on 'Lobt Gott, ihr Christen," the women's trio sang it a cappella in three-part arrangement. Then we soldiers sang 'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing.' I then went to the altar and said the Christmas collect in both German and English. The German congregation sang 'Kommt und lasst uns Christum ehren' and 'Nun singet und seid froh,' which they sing as a double hymn. The soldiers then sang 'It Came upon the Midnight Clear.' Then followed the reading of the Christmas Gospel in both languages. After the Gospel we sang 'Adeste Fideles,' each in his own tongue. Then I went to the pulpit and preached the German Christmas sermon, after which the women's trio sang 'Gelobet seist Du, Jesus Christ' and the soldiers 'O Little Town of Bethlehem.' Then followed the English address, which I had to cut shorter than usual because the cold was gradually penetrating, and time was flying. The German congregation then sang 'Vom Himmel hoch' and the soldiers 'The First Noel.' After the benediction in German and English we closed the service by singing 'Stille Nacht,' again each in his own tongue. I had purposely chosen English and American carols for our men to sing, so that the German congregation would hear those melodies.

The service was a success both from the standpoint of attendance and of the reaction. We had about 160 civilians present and about 105 soldiers. The soldiers were all delighted to hear the German Christmas hymns and were particularly pleased with the singing of the trio. One of the civilians told me the next day: 'If those citizens who left town with the Germans because they believed the German propaganda that the American soldiers were barbarians, could only have looked in on the service!'

"On Christmas Eve the officers who are staying in the same house with me were invited to attend the family Christmas celebration. We had a tree, decorated in old style with Christmas cookies and candles. We first sang 'Silent Night' together, they in German and we in English. Then we sat around and talked in three languages, German, English, and French, while they served us with an amazing variety of *hors d'oeuvres,* including some homemade stuffed goose liver, which is a specialty around here. Then we also had some charlotte russe mixed with fruits and nuts, and finally, to top it off, some Christmas cookies. These people tried as well as they could to make us feel a part of the family in order to substitute as well as they could for the one thing which we miss at Christmas time, the presence of our loved ones.

"The company Christmas dinner on Christmas Day was really something; as far as food and arrangements are concerned, we had everything. For once the men sat at tables, set with white tablecloths and white paper napkins in a room where a large Christmas tree had been set up with lights and ornaments and everything. Before they sat down to eat, the company commander wished them a 'Merry Christmas,' and I was asked to say grace. The silence of the men as they first came in and sat down (it almost seemed as if they were struck dumb) was the most striking evidence of their appreciation.

"Let's hope we shall not have to spend another Christmas in Europe."

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Combat Chaplains

WITH THE FAMOUS 101st AIRBORNE DIVISION

William John Reiss

When chaplain william john reiss was graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary at St. Louis, Mo., in the year of 1936, and accepted the call to Carrollton, Ill., he never dreamed that he would become the Division Chaplain of the famous 101st Airborne Division. The splendid record achieved while serving in the Aleutians was duplicated when he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division. While in Southern France he was awarded the Bronze Star medal for meritorious achievement in direct support of combat operations.

Dropping with his troops behind the lines in an airborne invasion, he was wounded and received the Purple Heart decoration. Then came the famous battle at Bastogne. All of us have read the account of the determined stand made by the members of this organization and how they, being outnumbered on every hand, doggedly clung to their position until the German bulge was pressed back over the line. The heroic achievement of this Division was so outstanding that it merited the Unit Citation, which was presented by General Eisenhower himself. He gave the following statement in connection with the Citation:

"It is a great personal honor for me to be here today to take part in a ceremony that is unique in American history. Never before has a full division been cited by the War Department, in the name of the President, for gallantry in action. This day marks the beginning of a new tradition in the American Army.

"With that tradition therefore will always be associated the name of the 101st Airborne Division and of Bastogne. Yet you men, because you are soldiers of proved valor and of experience, would be the last to claim that you are the bravest and the best. All the way from where the Marines are fighting on Iwo Jima through the Philippines and Southeast Asia, on through the Mediterranean, and along this great front, and on the Russian frontiers are going forward, day by day, those battles, sustained by the valor of you and the other Allied units that are beating this enemy to his knees. They are proving, once and for all, that dictatorship cannot produce better soldiers than can aroused democracy. In many of those actions are units that have performed with unexcelled brilliance. So far as I know, there may be many among you that would not rate Bastogne as your bitterest battle. Yet it is entirely fitting and appropriate that you should be cited for that particular battle.

"It happened to be one of those occasions when the position itself was of the utmost importance to the Allied Forces. You in reserve were hurried forward and told to hold that position. All the elements of drama, of battle drama, were there. You were cut off. You were surrounded. Only valor, complete self-confidence in yourselves and in your leaders, a knowledge that you were well trained, only the determination to win could sustain soldiers under those conditions. You were given a marvelous opportunity, and you met every test. Therefore you become a fighting symbol on which the United Nations, all the citizens of the Nations, can say to their soldiers today, 'We are proud of you.' And it is my great privilege to say to you here today, to the 101st Division, and all its attached units, 'I am awfully proud of you.'

"With this great honor goes also a certain responsibility. Just as you are the beginning of a new tradition, you must realize, each of you, that from now on the spotlight will beat on you with particular brilliance. Whenever you say you are a soldier of the 101st Division, everybody, whether it is on the street in the city, or in the Front Lines, will expect unusual conduct of you. I know that you will meet every test of the future like you met it at Bastogne.

"Good luck, and God be with each of you."

Chaplain William Reiss also shared in this Unit Citation and thus has added another ribbon to his growing collection. When he wrote concerning the experiences with the glider command, he made the following statement:

"One month ago, Aug. 15, we landed behind the enemy lines with our air-borne task force. I landed in the first glider down, exactly 20 minutes before H hour. We now have added another verse to the song 'Coming in on a wing and a prayer' – it applied to our glider, and it is 'coming in with *no* wings and only a prayer.' God surely must have been riding with us. We landed in a field of stakes and tore off our wings. Then the snipers opened up on us. It surely looks funny to see little holes appear in the fabric in line with your head and then to miss you altogether. And ever since that eventful day the Lord has been with me. Not so long ago I had a rear tire blown out on my jeep with shrapnel. A mortar landed in my area and blew the door of my sleeping quarters to smithereens. Last Monday at the front I started services, and Jerry heard the organ and laid down a 20-minute barrage; no one was hurt, church was continued, but was interrupted two more times by mortar fire. On the way home, snipers shot at us, but missed. So you can see for yourself that God rides with us.

"The same situation exists here as did in the Aleutians. These men are hungry for the Word of God, and you can't seem to have enough services for them. Since the beginning of the month I have averaged at least two a day all up and down the front lines. I am enjoying my work in spite of the danger and many sleepless nights. And it appears that the men are being brought closer to God each and every day. God surely means all to these men, who face death constantly. Don't get the idea that paratroopers are rowdies. They are honest, God-fearing men. Just taught to fight in a more rugged way.

"I still have not received my Communion kit. But a captured chaplain, who refused to return to the German lines, gave me a chalice and paten. I had a few wafers, and grape wine is made here. So I am pretty well all set.

"I have seen Nice, Cannes, Monte Carlo, and the whole of the French Riviera. Beautiful country, but I will trade it all for a little lot in Southern Illinois. I am not homesick, don't get me wrong, perhaps I am battle weary. The war news appears all in our favor. And it may not be too long before hostilities cease in Europe. We pray that God will grant a just and lasting peace.

"May He grant the Commission the power to carry on its tremendous program and grant success to their every undertaking.

"I must close. May God bless you always."

The Bastogne episode is described in the following words of this same chaplain.

"Although the figures on my monthly report won't bear out the statement, I have been very busy the past month, especially in contacts at the front and just visiting the men before they jump off. Now we are back in a rest area, and I have a few minutes' time to myself.

"In the course of the next two weeks I hope to qualify as a parachutist, and then I can jump on the next mission. I don't care too much about riding in one of those 'tow targets,' as the gliders are lovingly called. Naturally, thrills are a dime a dozen any way you go in with the Airborne; our only prayer is that we live long enough to enjoy them.

"As my last report indicates, I am now Division Chaplain of the famed 101st Airborne Division. I hope I can live up to its standards, and I pray God that the officers and men can live up to God's standards. So far, they have attended church exceptionally well. Each Sunday finds the Commanding General present as well as a great portion of his Staff. I suppose I have been exceptionally fortunate during my entire service in the Army to be attached to churchgoing units. Our attendance has grown since the first of the month, so that 250 chairs are not enough. How I wish the people at home could see their sons attending worship and under the most trying conditions.

"Two weeks ago, while holding service in a hayloft, the Jerries decided to shell the place; they sent rocket after rocket over, the building shook so hard and so often I expected it to collapse any minute. There were about 70 men present; we continued and finally finished with the service. As we went outside and looked around, my knees fairly buckled under me, and once again I was assured that 'Truly God was again in our place of worship,' because shells had landed all around the place, and the lower part of the barn was pitted with shrapnel holes. Not one man was injured. Surely we were scared, but God preserved us.

"You have probably read of the epic stand of the 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne, Belgium. Undoubtedly that will go down in history as one of the great military highlights of the present war. Later, after the war is over, I shall relate the tale of the 'Battered Bastards of the Bastion of Bastogne,' not skipping a single gory detail. But it will have to wait until then."

A COLORFUL CAREER

Martin William Baumgaertner

CHAPLAIN MARTIN WILLIAM BAUMGAERTNER received his commission in the Chaplains' Reserve Corps on Jan. 11, 1941, and was ordered to active duty on March 12 of that same year. He is a native son of the State of Illinois, born Aug. 17, 1912. After his graduation from Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, Mo., he was called to Bethlehem Lutheran Church at Austin, Ind.

Chaplain Baumgaertner was one of the first to be ordered to duty beyond the continental United States, his assignment taking him to the American contingent which was guarding the Dutch possessions in the Caribbeans. His career as chaplain has been most colorful, and he has the happy faculty of putting his thoughts into words which are expressive, highly interesting, and tinged with a fine sense of humor.

Chaplain Baumgaertner was wounded in line of duty over in France and hospitalized for a period of time, but was able to return to active duty with his engineers. He now wears the Purple Heart.

Chaplain Baumgaertner's observations as they were made in Trinidad, Italy, and in France are set forth in the following articles.

TRINIDAD

"Was to sail on Dec. 3, but, true to form, I missed the boat which sailed on Dec. 2. Washington made the mistake, and I have since gloated over my good fortune. New York proved immensely interesting! Finally left the wicked place on Dec. 16. Stopped at Bermuda, Puerto Rico, and arrived at Trinidad on Dec. 25. Loitered for a week and flew down here on New Year's Eve. Reported on Jan. 2. – Why the delay? – You don't know the half of it – spent two days waiting to get from the airport to Paramaribo, capital of Dutch Guiana. I won't spend much time describing the geographical oddities of this section. If you want to know what it's like, go to the library and read Smith's *Bushmaster.* The reeking filth, stench, and disease in evidence here makes me think that this is a part of creation that God did not have anything to do with.

"Zandrey Field is one station of four I must serve. Largest complement of men is there and must be reached by car and homemade Toonerville trolley, which is nothing but a halfedition of American trailer with a 1926 Chev motor in it and comes on call to the airfield and after three hours' wait takes you on the small-gauge track eight miles down the road to a grass-shack village of Onverwacht. Here an Army vehicle picks you up and takes you into P. Vom Himmelhoch! I never saw anything so primitive. If the one daily train (woodburner made in Berlin, 1903) is taken the entire thirty miles from the airfield into town, the trip takes three hours plus and costs 7.50 gulden, or some $3.40 in American money. Moengo, guard camp for the Bauzite Mine, is 125 miles up the river and takes twelve hours to reach – boat is the only transportation. Another station, Paraham, is thirty miles away by boat or car. Headquarters camp, two miles from this office on the edge of the jungle, is the fourth station. So far no agreement has been reached as to how often these will be served. Will likely circulate from here to all posts.

"Weather is extremely wet. Two seasons here, the wet and wetter season. Water is six inches below the surface. Showers are provided by putting up a series of pipes with sprays and taking a bulldozer and 'dozing' a hole three feet deep. There you have a pool of 2½ feet of water. A little gasoline motor pump is hooked up, and you have a shower. Will try and get you a picture for the next synodical convention of the best in modern plumbing. No screens, no barriers, and any ministerial dignity heretofore acquired will have to be recaptured upon return to civilization.

"Most of the force has suffered or is suffering from dengue fever, or dog fever, as it is known here. It comes from a mosquito bite, leaves you weak after four days of bulging eyes and severe headaches. Malaria, venereal disease, and usual tropical fevers are prevalent. So many men have trouble because of complete lack of any recreational equipment. No movies, not even magazines later than June, 1941. Most of them date back to 1936."

ITALY

"In the chill of an ancient Roman barracks, whose straw-ticks and pillows would not even have been a credit to Caligula's garrison of banishment in Minoa, I betake myself to the pleasant task of penning these momentous words over which posterity's rival museums will some day haggle. Less than 500 yards from this musty abode stand the remains of an ancient castle, built before Spain became a world power, which is said to house a rib of an ancient mammoth cow, said to have died of vexation because she was incapable of filling with milk a huge pail placed under her by a witch. If such cows ever lived there, I am doubly sorry that they are extinct, for our diet might well be augmented with a dash of fresh milk now and then.

The Well

'During the lull before the storm I have spent much time drinking in the lore of this much-fought-over countryside. Am always thrilled to come face to face with ancient pasts, as, for example, yesterday when I, like many another gullible newcomer, stared down a 365-foot well that was half masonry, half hewn out of solid bedrock. A tiny light burning at the bottom convinced me that it was deeper than I should undertake to disprove.

Times Do Not Change

"Tunneled slits, somewhat like keyholes, through which hot oil and molten lead were poured down upon the attackers of these ancient fortresses, also caught my fancy. You see, times have not changed a great deal, because I know a lot of people who are still pretty handy at the age-old art of pouring oil.

No Substitute for Sincerity

"As I look back on the past four years, one glaring fact stands out above all experiences, namely, that there is no substitute for sincerity and the unalterable conviction that truth *does* prevail. Be that in fearless preaching of the Bible truths, though you know there are dissenters in the audience, or be it in your daily relations with the men. No matter how great the opposition, they will always respect you for having the courage of your conviction and will despise one who halts between two opinions, one who is neither hot nor cold. Often I thought I was fighting a losing battle and standing alone, only to find that many men were rallying to my support and waiting for me to lead them. This is true more often in the daily affairs of our lives than the average layman realizes – for there are a great many problems that fall to a chaplain which cannot be classed as religious. On the other hand, one cannot overlook the precept of love in dealing with the men.

Restraint

"A soldier is about the most democratic institution there is, and he will outclass even a Missouri mule in stubbornness if any attempt is made to force on to him something which he may need but does not want. How often I've wanted to be a Paul Bunyan, who could lift the troublemakers by the nape of the neck and bash their heads together. But when tempers cooled, I again learned that 'a soft answer turneth away wrath.'

Radio, a Means of Blessing

"So often an opportunity presents itself to an aggressive chaplain which, though not strictly within the definition of his assignment, can prove of extreme value to his men and to his work. True, we are, by Army regulations, not to be assigned to secular duties. Yet, too often I've seen chances run to the ground by a defiant assertion, 'You can't make me do this!', when the cooperative attitude might have opened vast fields of opportunity. I have in mind a radio venture which proved one of the finest experiences of my ministry in the Army. Out of the blue came a decision from higher headquarters to install a small transmitter, which would bring American radio programs to our troops in isolated areas and so bring 'home' as well as a great deal of wholehearted entertainment during the temptation-laden hours of lonely watchfulness. As the project progressed, it became necessary to choose a manager who would pick a staff to operate the station, assimilate the news, audition talent, and, in general, supervise the operation of the station. By some quirk of the imagination it was rumored that I had done some work along these lines, and there being no one else with even a semblance of qualification, the subject was broached, and so, 'in addition to his other duties as chaplain,' I *unofficially* became manager. Through the many contacts made and the minor prestige one would normally receive in such a position my scope of influence for 'things worth fighting for' was tremendously increased. Instead of a vast amount of Army humor, which is rarely suitable for parlor use – clean, well-planned soldier-level shows were put on the air. And a reasonable plan was adopted as policy, whereby it was possible to have regular religious broadcasts.

Special Service to Troops

"One of the most appreciated things we've done for the men is a little service we instituted at Christmas, Easter, and Mother's Day, for the soldiers' convenience, whereby they could send attractive floral greetings to their greatest loves and have them delivered on the designated date. To send gifts was almost impossible and most inconvenient. This surprising means of expressing one's sentiments ran into a gargantuan business of over thirty thousand dollars for one Easter-Mother's Day season. My only lament is a selfish one – I had no relations in the floral business!

Compensations

"Compensations in the chaplaincy are, if any, somewhat different from those of the civilian pastor. The indescribable job of building a congregation and seeing the fruits of your labors over a period of years is not ours. Hardly do we get our feet in the stirrups, and there comes a change in assignment – where you start all over again. Yet our reward is not an essential part of our success. No doubt, any chaplain who has faithfully done his sincere best — even though he may have but limited ability — will, when summoned to his eternal reward, learn that the many heartaches of his earthly labors have been crowning successes in God's sight and that the conversation he once had with that despondent soul, when he felt that he had failed completely, was, by God's grace, instrumental to his friend's salvation.

"All in all, my tour of duty has been a glorious adventure in living and soul saving. *D. v.*, the mistakes of the past will not be repeated, and for such experience I shall be the better fitted and more worthy of the work that lies ahead. Now we're off to fight a 'shootin' war,' but we'll write about that later."

FRANCE

"At this sitting I am sheltered in the battered remains of a majestic castle precariously teetering on the ledge of a badly bombed mountainside overlooking Germany proper. Behind me is a battery of artillery guns whose operators must hardly ever sleep, for with monotonous regularity they belch forth their messages of death. The concussion is so terrific that this typewriter does a curious rhumba every time they roar. Added to the disturbing qualities of these friendly sleep-robbers is the occasional WHAM of 'incoming mail,' as we affectionately call the enemy's contribution to our discomfort. To top things off, some playful paratrooper, with time on his hands, periodically sets off heavy charges of dynamite in the valley on the pretext of trying to break up an ice jam caused by the recent thaw. Five pounds would do the job, but it's more fun to use 105. Besides, it makes more noise and cascades the ice so much higher!

"My engineers have the unhappy task of clearing the infernal mines and booby traps left in the wake of the retreating enemy. With frequent snows to cover up these innocent looking devices of destruction the job becomes even more dangerous than it ordinarily is. Like falling parachutists, these men rarely have occasion to rectify a mistake. Yet, the calculating coolness with which they go about their work makes one think they are impervious to harm and completely devoid of nerves. I often watch these operations from a reasonably safe distance, prepared to offer the little assistance and consolation possible in the event of an error. Yesterday two officers whom I knew well held a consultation all too near one of their recent discoveries, deliberating as to how the device might most safely be removed. A decision was never reached, nor was one of the bodies. It is most disconcerting to note how clerverly man can employ his ingenuity to destroy his fellow man. If only a minute fraction of that effort and cost were deployed to the preservation and assistance of our badly mauled and war-tired world, what a paradise it might be. But surely God has a wise purpose which we cannot always see in our natural blindness. Have often thought how worth while it would be to our spiritual health if we were as superconscious of the spiritual dangers that surround us as we have now become of physical dangers in this 'live-by-the-hour' existence that is ours.

"How does all this affect the temperament of the average soldier? Oddly enough, not an appreciable amount, at least not while the danger exists. The American soldier is a peculiar combination of happy-go-lucky severity. He is not easily perturbed, even in the face of great danger. To him danger is a challenge that is to be met, and so he quietly goes about the business of meeting it. Some fall, it's true, but great stakes cannot be won without a price, and when one sees the havoc and devastation that has come to these once prosperous people in this once prosperous country — and you allow yourself to imagine that this crumbled smoldering mass before you might have been your home town, your house, your church, and that those destitute people probing through the ruins near that dead horse might have been your own parents — then one has a rather clear picture of what he is fighting for, and if he has a spark of faith left within his breast, he breathes a prayer of gratitude that God in His mercy has spared his own country from becoming a battlefield to be laid waste by the unspeakable ravages that are war! People often ask whether men are not more receptive to our ministry when the danger is greatest. Certainly, men are more inclined to pray in danger than when they are secure. Who isn't? There are also those who will do some very serious thinking when they feel that their time is about run out. But those men who pray have prayed for the most part before, and those who think have thought before. I have yet to see fear supersede love in winning men for Christ. This *is* true, they are perhaps happier to see a chaplain at such times than otherwise, but that pleasure probably is based on the same reasoning that makes a deserter taper his running away from the front lines into a slow walk when he sees a general. The point being, that if he's that far back, he must be out of the danger zone.

"Tonight I shall keep my customary schedule with this company, as I do each night with the various companies attached to this group. There will first be a complete church service with Communion in a boarded-up room lighted by altar candles and torches made by inserting a twisted rag into the neck of a wine bottle filled with gasoline. The service is followed by a discussion period, during which the men will bring up questions pertaining to the sermon, religion in general, or vaguely related subjects. To break the monotony of listening to the same voice with all the correct answers, I call on my driver assistant to take over and entertain with his accordion. Being a master at the art of leading song fests and goading those present into participating, 'Joe' succeeds in making the men for the most part entertain themselves. As time wears on, I contribute a Sinatra version of 'It Could Happen to You,' at which point everybody yearningly thinks of the day of his induction. This is followed by a twangy rendition of 'San Fernando Valley,' with a few hot licks tossed in for good measure. Coming from a chaplain, these modern unchurchly versions seem doubly amusing to the men. For an encore some sedate soul will request 'Seated One Day at the Organ,' but since we've been sitting too long already, we substitute a more appropriate anthem, such as 'I Walk Alone,' at which time most of them wish they had left right after church. Having now successfully bridged the transition of moods from the serious to the sublime, we are ready for the third feature on the program, namely, 'War Digest.' I have given so many digests of the news that by now I have a pretty good story worked up on the cause, prosecution, and outcome of this war. Patriotically I have tried too often to explain our reverses as 'strategic withdrawals' and our successes as 'brilliant initiative,' that if Eisenhower ever wants to know what really happened, I should have the answer lying around somewhere. Several months ago one of my battalions was transferred to an Armored Spearhead. During one of the nightly war talks I ventured this prediction: 'Don't be at all surprised if the same happens to you real soon.' Less than an hour later not only they, but the entire Army was transposed to a new front to handle a slight irregularity that Friend Rundstedt accommodatingly had fostered to bear out my prediction. Needless to say, I was referred to as either being psychic or knowing the password to the map room at Allied Supreme Headquarters.

"All too often men who are making the news don't realize that they are the focal point of world interest. It's quite easy for a soldier to lose himself in his immediate task and feel that the removal of one road block has little to do with the progress of the war. When, however, he is told that that road block has halted the progress of an entire division, then he becomes interested in his work. This, too, is important to morale.

"Where these nightly discussions sometimes lead is unpredictable, and the answers I venture to some of their questions even more so. But, as all things which go up won't float around forever, so our evenings must also come to an end. To prevent too abrupt a conclusion, the evening is tapered off by allowing the line to form to the right for autographs, to the left for individual problems. The line to the left pays a minimum fee of one air mail stamp if services require a love letter to be written to some girl friend with a waning interest, all of which reminds me that I have some amorous fences to repair on my home front.

"(Philosophical conclusion) And so the war continues! Each day is rich in experience, full of excitement, and crowded with opportunity. In spite of the light vein in which I write, there is a feeling of sad regret that comes over me. Sad, because there is so little time and so much to do. How many must meet their Creator without the proper preparation, without the consolation and assurance of their forgiveness. If God might only let the sun stand still, as He did for Joshua, just a moment, so that we could reach them all and so obtain a complete victory."

UNEXPECTED GLIMPSES

Martin Ramming

"WITH BIRTHDAY GREETINGS still coming in to express the hope that I hit 88 before one hits me, I am quite convinced that I shall be spry at 90. Which, now that I see it in print, is quite a horrible thought, because everybody knows that 'Spry' is fat and good only for cooking. Do they really do that to old people, or does it just mean that I shall be a rotund chef upon retirement?

"Your letter of Feb. 14 suggested that we chaplains are too hesitant in speaking of our work. But whenever I resolve to go to press, I am overcome by a realization of my inability to describe adequately the work of an Infantry chaplain in combat. It is like being in love with a fickle creature who has no intention of being faithful, yet refuses to let you go, and by unexpected glimpses of affection keeps you hanging between despair and hope.

"Somehow I do not find my work as a chaplain vastly different from my civilian mission work. Consequently you might just as well assign a publicity agent to cover Candidate John Peter Luther and his lodge-hall preaching station. It is the same beautiful story, some might even call it long-suffering and patient, but then 'mustard seeds' are not photogenic and frequently defy recognition. Take away the uniforms, and I would have a hard time proving that I was not 'plowing' along in some spot in Texas. It just happens to be my work, and I love it, and I am happy doing it.

"After a few years of pulpitless preaching in mortuaries, a bookie office, and a hall two flights up, it isn't much of a trick to follow the Infantry and hold forth in bombed churches, a shattered room, a barn, sometimes in the comfort of a hayloft, or out in the open. In fact, it seemed very proper to begin Advent with a service in a carpenter's shop, and there was something wonderful about celebrating Holy Communion in a barn filled with hay on Christmas Eve while a huge black and white cow stood solemnly by chewing her cud. It was not so long ago that we had service on the side of a hill, utilizing a rare afternoon of sunshine. For some reason enemy artillery whistled over us constantly. I have seen audiences much more disturbed by the whining of a baby, which isn't half as dangerous.

"Of course, divine worship services give a definite pattern to my work, but the complete picture is an aggregate composite of little things . . . some humorous, some tragic, joy and tears, faith and sin, jumbled up. Discussing the Epistles of Peter in the sunshine of Normandy and Galatians in a cellar within hearing distance of the guns . . . planning to sing 'Now Let Every Tongue Adore Thee,' but having instead prayers of thanksgiving as one by one the choir members were carried through the Aid Station . . . having a smooth-shaven son of this world boast just before the first jump-off, 'This is one stray sheep who doesn't intend to repent in a foxhole, because.' . . . A week later a grisly bearded individual suddenly says, 'Chaplain, I'm a liar.' . . . Stopping in the middle of a private Communion service to borrow wine from the kitchen of the local priest because someone had filched not only the extra supply of wine but had also drained the sacramental container . . . stammering through some Psalms in German trying to comfort some shell-frightened civilians . . . reviewing the doctrine of Baptism beside a Bailey Bridge . . . surprising some civilians and soldiers with a first-rate, though spontaneous, concert of Christmas music in January . . . talking religion with an officer. 'Let me show you something,' he said, 'which is the best thing I have found, next to the 23d Psalm, for keeping myself calm. Some chaplain was handing them out as we passed by.' It was a copy of the golden folder *Battlefield Prayers* * . . . singing Bach's Christmas Oratorio, Part I, in March with some men fresh off the front line.

"I remember spending four hours a day all the way across the Atlantic discussing with three men the truth of Scripture, and it all happened because one man said, 'I really do not know what I believe since I've been to college.' That same man was later captured by the Germans, succeeded in escaping, and after several harrowing experiences behind the enemy lines reached his company again. One evening he told me, 'I really wasn't afraid. Somehow I knew the Lord *was* my Shepherd.' The second man was baptized and is now 'missing in action.' The third was confirmed in France and is still with us.

"Perhaps we chaplains do not get to know men very intimately; yet somehow the power of the Word makes them look upon us as close friends. A man was brought into the Aid Station, very seriously wounded. I did not know him. He was from a different unit. As plasma was being administered, I knelt beside him and said, 'How are you doing, fellow? This is the Chaplain.' His eyes popped open, and pain seemed to leave his face as he spoke eagerly a chaplain's name. It wasn't my name, and when he saw me, he laughed at his blunder. We prayed there. When I started the Lord's Prayer, he joined in, and every word seemed to be a struggle. At the word Amen he tightened his grip upon my hand, and I knew he feared I was leaving; so I began to confess the 23d Psalm. He insisted upon repeating every phrase after me until his voice gradually faded. I quietly finished and straightened up. He was asleep. Suddenly, without opening his eyes, he cried out, 'Chaplain, do you know any more?' I thank God that I did, because those were the last words he ever spoke. Later I contacted the chaplain whose name he called. He had never met the man. Had never heard the name.

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* Issued by the Army and Navy Commission.

"Just one more story, and I must stop. A casuality reached the Aid Station who was almost lifeless. There was only the faintest pulse and no evidence of consciousness. His veins would not take the plasma needle for a transfusion. While the doctor performed a successful but nevertheless futile operation of isolating a vein to be fed directly, I began to pray for the man. There was no reaction. I began the Lord's Prayer. A change came over his face. His lips moved slightly, and very faintly he said, 'Thy kingdom come.' That was all. Presently the doctor pronounced him dead.

"I believe you can understand how anxious I am to get back to my family again, but until that day I believe you can also understand why I am content. I am completely fed up on war, and I long for the day when I rent another hall in His name and dream with my wife and son of a church with a magic steeple. Of this I am convinced, although I do not understand it, that somehow God walks amid the death, the misery, and the sin, and He wins hearts. It matters not whether it is in peace or in war."

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Italy

BATTLE-SCARRED VETERAN

Leland R. Larson

Among the chaplains who bear upon their bodies the marks of battle is Leland R. Larson, born at Webster, S. Dak., March 11, 1903. He came to the chaplaincy from Trinity Lutheran Church, Sandstone, Minn., and received his endorsement for the chaplaincy on May 21, 1941. His first assignment took him to the 31st Infantry Division at Camp Claiborne, La., where he was attached to the 135th Infantry. During March, 1942, we find him at Fort Dix in New Jersey awaiting assignment beyond the continental United States.

During June, 1942, we find him in Northern Ireland paving the way for the Lutheran chaplains who were to come over there in quick succession. His untiring zeal increased attendance at divine service, and Holy Communion for Lutheran men was celebrated frequently. During December, 1942, we find him on his way once more. Early in 1943 he reported his presence in Tunisia, Africa, where he had contacted other chaplains who served in that area, among whom were Chaplain W. Daib, Chaplain Richard A. Tschirley, and Chaplain Karl Schleede.

In the fall of 1943 we find him in Italy, still serving with the 135th Infantry. Here his regiment was in the thick of things, pressing the Nazis in their retreat, who were fighting delaying actions in order to gain time to establish strategic defenses. Staying with his regiment in the heat of battle, Chaplain Larson obtained a leg injury, which hospitalized him during the latter part of February, 1944.

A brief, but exciting glimpse of the activity in Italy is given in this account.

IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE

"During the battle our chaplain was on the front lines with his men. A fellow chaplain at his side was hit. Chaplain Leland R. Larson carried him to the side. Then a captain fell. Chaplain Larson also carried him to the side.

"By that time someone called to him: 'Chaplain, you'd better get back to your tent to receive the wounded.'

"The chaplain started back. However, Nazi artillery was shooting too high, and shells began falling all around him. So he came back toward the front and ministered to the wounded there.

"Later he discovered that the tent in which he was to have been stationed had been ripped by a bomb."

Chaplain Leland Larson was evacuated from Italy and was confined to the Crile General Hospital at Cleveland, Ohio, during the month of June, 1944. He was able to obtain a leave of absence to attend the national convention of the Missouri Synod at Saginaw, Mich. After a rest period he was assigned to the Chief of Chaplains Office, Washington, D. C., with Special Service of Information and Education. Now he is serving at Camp Maxey, Tex., on a limited duty status.

While serving in Ireland, Chaplain Larson found time to pen a few lines concerning interesting activity over there.

SERVING LUTHERAN TROOPS IN IRELAND

"Pardon me, Padre, but aren't you a Lutheran chaplain?" The chaplain looked up from the fevered brow of a soldier, who was being taken by ambulance to the Receiving Station

Hospital, to the earnest face of a young ambulance driver from Iowa. "Why, certainly," was the answer.

"Well, sir, I wish you would come to —— and hold a Lutheran Communion Service for us. I haven't been able to go to Lord's Supper since December. And I know some other fellows in our outfit who would like to attend."

The following Sunday the service was held through arrangement and co-operation of the commanding officer, and five Lutheran soldiers received God's pledge and seal that their sins were forgiven. There were only five, but there was never a more appreciative audience than these men who stood in an air-raid shelter before a table draped with the chaplain's only clean sheet, upon which were placed altar fixtures and Communion vessels supplied by our Army and Navy Commission.

Only five this time. But there were other Communions the chaplain remembered where he found fifty and more Lutheran soldiers eager for the privilege of being guests at the Lord's Table. There was the time when another chaplain (a Roman Catholic) called him by phone and asked him to conduct a Lutheran Communion Service for the men in his outfit who had brought the request to their Catholic chaplain. That was the service which was held in a dance hall in another part of Northern Ireland, and the men came from outposts fifteen miles away in Army trucks to attend. Others who were on guard arranged to take less desirable hours of guard duty so that they would not miss this opportunity. Many of the soldiers came to the chaplain after the service to express their gratitude personally. Among these was the first soldier of the Second A. E. F. to set foot on North Ireland soil. Wherever your chaplain went, he invariably found men of our faith who were hungering and thirsting for the Word and the Sacrament.

SOLDIERS WANT NO PIOUS PLATITUDES

Officers would sometimes tell him of hearing the men remark how much they appreciated the dignified type of church service and that they were determined to attend church from now on. "Your sermon on the centurion of Acts 10 was especially appreciated," said one officer. Officers and enlisted men alike make it evident that the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ still remained a power of God unto salvation to everyone who heard and believed. They wanted more than pious platitudes. These men were facing an uncertain future, and they wanted the certainty of God's loving-kindness; and they wanted it told to them in unmistakable terms.

It was a happy and humbling thought to the chaplain that God had chosen him as His instrument to bring the saving Gospel to soldiers in their hazardous duty on foreign soil. He was proud, too, that he was able to serve his country in this manner. There was only one thought which caused him great concern and a feeling of sadness – he could not reach *all* the Lutheran men in North Ireland, since they were stationed at such widely separated places. His first duty was to his unit. Here also were the men of his faith looking for his ministrations.

ONE HUNDRED MILES IN A "PEEP"

Often this chaplain has traveled nearly a hundred miles in a "peep," conducting three services a Sunday in three different camps so that he might answer the requests of our Lutheran men for Lutheran church services. What this means becomes more evident when it is learned that "peeps" are not built for comfort. They have no soft springs nor cushioned seats and certainly no side curtains to cut off the chilly night air of Northern Ireland. They were built for combat duty. Moreover, one who has never seen this country has no idea of the difficulties of traveling over the narrow, winding roads in "blackouts" with always and ever the possibility of coming upon a herd of cows or sheep in the road being driven to or from the pastures. And always a different place to hold services, so that each service required different planning and arranging. Sometimes the church service was held in a "borrowed" church, and the chaplain's task was somewhat easy. Sometimes it was in one of the huts built with corrugated steel, rounded roofs, and cement floors. More often divine worship was held in buildings previously arranged by other chaplains.

In-between times your chaplain in Northern Ireland is busily conducting Bible classes which are really Catechism classes, giving spiritual advice to many who are seeing the Lord for the first time (the exigency of the times has a way of bringing men to God); helping men with their personal problems; watching out for their morale and physical well-being; and, above all, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and administering the Sacraments.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

A SEASONED VETERAN

Henry W. C. Luedke

"I WILL MAKE A FEW RUNNING STATEMENTS in reply to some things in your letters. Ever since a brief rest after we took Rome last spring I have been running around, trying to keep pace with the tremendous details of the chaplaincy. The Executive warned me to slow down a little the other day. There is so much to do for the men on the line, spiritually, that I get in the dumps quite often and feel that this tough job in the mountains and mule trails is more than I can begin to handle. But early in February one day I got an order to be back at Headquarters early in the afternoon; we were to have a formation. This took place. And then I was ordered to step forward. The General came and pinned a Bronze Star on me. What for? 'Well,' he said, 'Chaplain, you have done a wonderful job.' I said, 'Thank you, Sir.' And gave him a snappy salute. I didn't hear the half page of citation the sergeant read. I remembered hearing 'shell fire.' Such words naturally catch my ear. Shell fire and its potentialities have thoroughly penetrated my subconscious mind. So has bombing. I have stopped counting the occasions long ago. Indeed, the spirit is willing, for I have an implicit faith in my Savior, but the flesh is so weak. In moving about among my more than twenty units often I am out in the open away from any cover. On numerous occasions my men were positive I was a casualty. The Lord still performs miracles; that is the only answer. Still, the element of danger has not deterred me from my work. Only once I turned around when a sharp turn was being shelled by the enemy. Well, I lost nerve and didn't drive through either. Nobody did then. Besides, it was bitter cold and sleeting. I was cold and quite depressed. This was to be a Christmas service for several of my units; but I got there several days later and added a Lutheran Communion Service, which was well attended. I have small unit services for security reasons. Practically all are held out in the open field. Two weeks ago near the end of my sermonet a big shell dropped quite near, but it was a dud. Less than that — well enough of this.

"This Easter the services will not be anything beyond routine. Circumstances will not permit anything for the photographer or news service. But in my heart the risen Lord will have a place cleansed by His Spirit and His Blood.

"Do the men appreciate my visits at the many far-scattered implacements? Yes, they do. And they come to services, too; take turns at it, since all cannot leave their posts at the same time. Few, very few Protestants in my big Divisional unit, have not heard me preach. Three fourths come to church regularly. My monthly report does not indicate this, but there is a lot more that cannot be told in figures. In my estimation the monthly report cannot indicate the amount of work in back of those statistics.

"That reminds me of the various requests from the Commission for human interest stories. That is all good, yes, fine on your part. And I feel you people are doing well. But, first of all, I can't write of events so impressive as many of our chaplains experience. It discourages my best of intentions and plans to send articles when the *Witness* and our *Loyalty News* and other periodicals contain material that is so wonderful. What really discourages me is that some are so grand that I either can't believe them or judge them as 'phony.' Now, that is only personal with me and stated academically, I don't want to be cruel in that statement. I just happen to know a little about tables of organization and combat situations in the Infantry, Artillery, and other combat branches of the service. And I am still sensitive enough to feel it when a bug gets in my reading eye. And by now I can count over 300 days on the line, and a goodly number were spent with the Infantry visiting some of our Lutheran men, most of those visits under fire."

AN EVALUATION

Wm. K. Kautz

"WHILE IN THE ARMY our soldiers become familiar with many expressions peculiar to the Army, and these expressions are as a rule abbreviated. But of all the expressions a soldier learns, I dare say there are none that impress themselves more firmly upon his memory than POM (preparation for overseas movement), POR (preparation of overseas replacements), and POE (port of embarkation).

"After the matters pertaining to POM and POR have finally been taken care of, the soldier finds himself at length at the POE. The hour has struck! He is at last going to enter that boat which will take him across the broad expanse of the ocean.

And after that boat docks on the other side, that 'O' in POM and POR takes on its full meaning; he is 'overseas.'

"Coming into a strange land where people speak a strange language and have strange customs, the soldier instinctively gropes for some little sign which might remind him of his homeland. How it thrills him as he walks through the streets of some strange city or town and suddenly sees 'Old Glory' flying in front of some building! He comes closer and sees the sign 'American Red Cross.' He enters, and he finds here so many things provided for his comfort. As he contemplates all these things, he sees in his mind's eye all those homes back in his beloved America bearing the American Red Cross sticker to show that here is a family that has made a donation toward the Red Cross Fund so that soldiers in foreign lands might have a few comforts. The soldier realizes this and is grateful.

"Eventually that soldier finds his way to some chaplain's office. As he glances about in that office, he begins to feel more at home than ever. What is it that makes him feel that way? He sees there on the chaplain's shelves the religious literature put out by his own Church's Army and Navy Commission. He became acquainted with this literature back in the States. It afforded him much comfort then; it affords him still greater comfort now.

"As he ponders the fact that his Church's literature has preceded him overseas, he not only realizes the proficiency with which his Church's Army and Navy Commission operates, but he also realizes that someone must have made it possible. He thinks of all those men and women in the congregations back home who have donated so faithfully toward the work of the Army and Navy Commission. It makes him proud to belong to a Church like that. And when a chaplain of another Church picks up the literature of the Army and Navy Commission and says, 'Soldier, your Church certainly puts out some wonderful material,' then a double feeling of pardonable pride comes over him. And once again he is grateful."

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Germany

WE CROSSED THE RHINE

George L. Steinbeck

"In one of your recent letters you said that you 'had me pegged' for Northern France. Wrong! I have been on the Western Front and in Germany now since last November! Spent about six weeks in Normandy and then moved into Belgium in October. At that time we saw our first combat fighting as the only American troops under the 1st Canadian Army in the drive last fall to free the Port of Antwerp. That job successfully accomplished, we were put right 'on the line' just east of Aachen under our own 'first' and have been pushing on deeper into Germany ever since. Where we are at present will have to be divulged to you by current news reports and maps.

"In spite of what 'Frenchy' Theiss said about my German in his column in the December *Messenger*, I have had some interesting experiences serving as interpreter for German soldier and civilian casualties which have come through our Clearing Station.

"As far as services are concerned – we haven't missed a Sunday yet, even though at times we have been 'on the move' and the groups have been small. Across the Continent I have held services among the hedgerows and apple orchards of Normandy, in the fields of Belgium, various buildings, barns, haylofts, schools, hospitals, and fields of Germany.

"Just a couple of Sundays ago I conducted a service in the very shadow of the beautiful but now damaged, however still impressive, towers of the Cologne Cathedral. Taking advantage of the Remagen Bridgehead, we crossed the Rhine, spent a night in the fields near Bad Honeff on the eastern bank, and then – all of a sudden Allied power showed its real strength, and things broke wide open. The German countryside with its forests, green hills, well-cultivated farms, and quaint villages has been (and still is) very interesting. It could be a lot more interesting if we were not at war! It is such a beautiful country, especially now in its cloak of spring verdure!

"Easter services? Yes, we had them! In fact, I had two of them, plus a Lutheran Communion. But the situation is still fluid, and our attendances were not what they might have been had we been more stationary. However, we had planned and printed Easter bulletins and an order of service when we were still 'sitting' on the other side of the Rhine.

"God has blessed me with good health, and I deem it a privilege to be here with the men. The going gets a little rough at times, but being with the Clearing Station, I am only occasionally exposed to enemy artillery fire or occasional night raids by one of the few remaining Luftwaffe. I am grateful for God's abundant guidance and protection thus far and continue to pray that He will aid us further in soon restoring peace to this bewildered and war-torn country.

"Otherwise things are still well with me, and we are planning our Special Thanksgiving Service on the front for V-E Day. God grant that it may come soon!"

"DIE WACHT AM RHEIN"

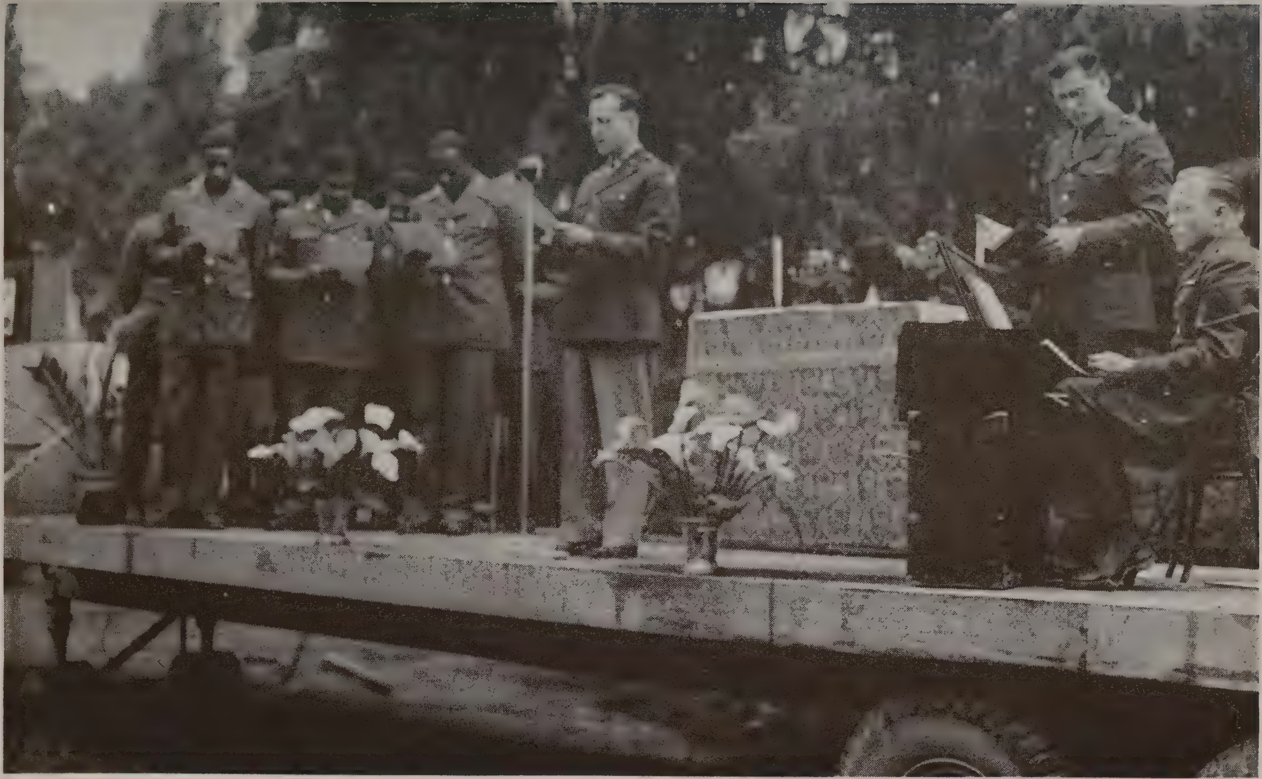
Ernest E. Heuer

"While we have respite from battle, I shall requisition some good Nazi stationery for a word of greeting other than monthly reports. This letter is also occasioned by the fact that today I received your letter of Dec. 5, 1944. It must have had the misfortune of getting on that ship which returned to port three times for repairs. I received four Christmas cards today also; so don't feel bad that your letter was so long in arriving. I always enjoy that something extra you add to your comments on our reports.

"I might have headed this as 'Wacht am Rhein,' for that is what this is, but it is the G. I.'s doing the watching. We left Holland to be thrown in on the dash to the Rhine about the third or fourth day after the opening. The division was in excellent condition and swept on to the Rhine in the matter of hours, only to see the bridges blown before our eyes. Our regimental CO sort of had his heart set on getting at least one of the three bridges across the Rhine here at Duesseldorf. Two soldiers did get across but could not be re-inforced.

"I am staying with the medic section in a beautiful large home with lights, heat, and water. We sleep in twin beds. Even have glass in the windows. Other sections of this little city didn't fare so well, especially those sections near railroads or factories.

"Sunday I had two services in a factory, the home of forced laborers (women), either Russian or Polish. The first service was disturbed by their walking around with their wooden shoes. For the next service I thought I had gone high church, an aroma-like incense permeated and saturated the air! But it wasn't exactly incense, it was definitely someone stewing or in other ways mistreating onions. At the close of the service my clerk looked



Altar on Wheels, Chaplain Victor C. Frank Officiating, Somewhere Overseas

Somewhere Overseas with the Canadian Army, Chaplain H. A. Merklinger, Extreme Left, Visits His Men at me and dryly remarked, 'Chaplain, that stank. . . . I mean the onions.'

"There is a Lutheran church here. It is well built and seats about 800 people. The roof is whole, but the windows are gone. It is the first I had a chance to visit on the Continent. The pulpit and the altar stood like sentinels amidst the rubble as if to remind one that the Word here preached is eternal. I thought I could see the fingerprints of the Almighty and hear echoes of the voice of Luther resounding in this land four hundrd years earlier, warning his people against forgetting the Gospel. You tread softly amidst such ruins. It was man who made them but undoubtedly God who directed them. On the vestibule bulletin board was the notice: 'Kirchensteuer musz jetzt bezahlt werden.' That brought to mind Synod's Peace Thankoffering. . . . Thanks that this wreckage did not come over our home churches."

CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY

Raymond L. Kasper

"CHRISTMAS WAS INDEED A HAPPY OCCASION even though celebrated in bleak surroundings. The town in which we are located is occupied with German-speaking Frenchmen, or Lothringer, as they prefer to call themselves. Everyone speaks German – during the occupation of this territory speaking of the French language was forbidden. As the German language is rather well known to me, I am able to converse freely with the civilians. Have made friends with numerous children in the neighborhood, and for Christmas had the children sing such well-known carols as 'Ihr Kinderlein, kommet,' 'O du froehliche, O du selige' (in the German language), a few French carols, and then 'Silent Night, Holy Night' in English, which the children had learned for the occasion. These children sang for our patients and also in our regular services. The men seemingly enjoyed this very much, as the singing of these songs by the youngsters took us all back to the happy days when we were children, spending Christmas at home, and later when we attended the children's programs given in our own congregations.

"This town has no Protestant pastor at the present time. A few civilians approached me with the request that I conduct German services for them. I received the necessary permission through Army channels; and I am meeting with one of the elders tomorrow to make final arrangements as to where and when the services are to be held. The local church was damaged by shell fire, and we are planning to use the local school. There will be no heat, as coal is not available, but when war comes as close to people as it has here, the inconvenience of sitting in a cold hall for church services does not dampen their enthusiasm or desire to hear the inspiring Gospel of peace and salvation.

"You may wonder about the large number of services conducted during the past month. Due to the peculiar setup of our hospital, with many wards, each ward divided into rooms for about eight to twelve patients, and due to the type of patients we have, it is necessary to conduct separate services in each room. To give each group one service a week requires conducting about thirty to forty services. Each service averages about twenty-five minutes in length, consisting of an opening hymn, Scripture reading, sermon (no more than fifteen minutes), prayer, and benediction. Occasionally the men request another favorite hymn. I use my portable field organ for all these services and play the organ myself. My assistant stays in the office to take care of administrative matters which arise, looks after the library, writes my official letters, makes out my reports, requisitions, etc. An average of four to five hours a day per month are used conducting church services. The men seem to appreciate these services. I usually carry a good supply of chewing gum, which I pass out to them, and also have lighter fluid to fill their cigarette lighters.

WE INVADE GERMANY

William G. Mehringer

"Several weeks ago the battalion received orders to move into Honningen, a small town on the banks of the Rhine, which had a population of about 4,000 in pre-war days. It had but two industrial plants — one manufacturing tile products, the other household chemical products, such as washing soda. I accompanied the billeting party to Honningen to act as interpreter. The town had been caught in a crossfire of German and American artillery and was pretty well shattered. Much of it now lies in ruins. I have not seen a single house that has escaped damage. Windows have been shattered everywhere. On some houses the roof has been so completely stripped of tiles that it gives the appearance of a house under construction, with the contractor ready to begin laying tiles in the morning. Others have gaping holes in the roof or walls; many in both places. Railroad cars are a mass of twisted steel on the sidings. The factories at the southern edge of the town, which provided most of the townsfolk with employment, have been almost completely destroyed. One of the buildings was still burning when we passed by. The factory, like much of the town, will have to be rebuilt after the war.

"Public utilities were also out of commission. There was no gas, water, or electricity. The homes of the poor, where poverty precluded the luxury of running water and made the old-fashioned pump a necessity, now became havens of refuge. It was a motley crowd that lined up morning and evening to fill their pails with water. Rich and poor, old and young, were now reduced to a common level. There was neither class distinction nor privileged character, but according to the rule 'First come, first served,' the people fell in at the end of the line as they arrived. The 'Upper 400' saw for the first time how the other half of the world lives. Coal oil lamps and candles were at a premium among civilians. Flashlights were not used, because batteries for them had long since disappeared from the market. Now city folk and farmers alike 'went to bed with the chickens.'

"Despite the devastation wrought in the town we found surprisingly large numbers of civilians there. We learned later that they had huddled in the basements while the war raged in the streets. Many of the basements had been especially prepared for that purpose. About every four feet steel girders were laid across the basement just under the celing and the space between filled in with concrete to form a series of arches. Some were equipped with a heavy steel door. The windows were blocked with heavy logs or large stones. The people had put chairs, cots, or beds, or just a mattress, food, etc., in these private air-raid shelters, so that they could spend hours there if need be. Many a night they had slept there. Two nights I slept there myself.

"In examining the basements further we found holes had been broken through the basement walls between the houses, so that it is possible to enter a house on one corner of the block, travel through the basements, and come out of the house on the other end of the block. This had all been very carefully planned, not only as a means of escape for civilians, but also for house-to-house fighting. The edges of the openings were made smooth with concrete, to prevent snagging of the clothing in case of a quick exit, and then closed with a temporary wall of light concrete brick. The house in which we were quartered was in the center of the block, and by means of these openings we traveled through the basements of several homes in both directions. In one we broke out the temporary wall with the foot. We just wanted to see how easily it could be done.

"Billeting an entire battalion in a town that has been so heavily damaged, with so many civilians still there and already quite crowded by other troops, seems like a hopeless task. But after scouring the town we found a row of tenement houses that were just vacated by another unit. We quickly reserved these. A short distance away we found another cluster of houses that were hit, but not too badly damaged. These houses appeared to have been the homes of the wealthy at one time, but later converted into apartments. Civilians were still living in all of them. Other civilians had moved in with these families, because troops were billeted in their homes. One family had just pulled up to the doorway with a load of their belongings when we arrived. Now we were taking over these buildings, and they had to move again. Because of our policy of non-fraternization, civilians are moved out before the troops move into a house.

"The process of obtaining buildings is very simple. You just jot down the number of the house and the number of civilians living there and give that information to the burgomaster through the Military Government. They then arrange a place for the civilians to go and give them a certain hour by which they must be cleared out. For some reason the civilians usually have the impression that they are being permanently dispossessed. They realize they cannot take everything with them in the time allotted, and the sorting process begins. It is interesting to see what they finally choose. Items of clothing and food are left behind to make room for a lamp, a picture, or some impractical item whose only value is measured in terms of sentiment.

"When we had selected the buildings we wanted, we took the required information to the burgomaster. Here we saw a little incident that struck us as rather humorous and at the same time the height, or shall we say the depth, of humiliation. Two Nazis had been ordered to put new rope on the flag pole and hoist the American flag over the town hall. When we emerged from the building, their task was complete. It was a thrilling sight to see the Stars and Stripes flying above the town. No wonder they call it 'Old Glory.' The task of the billeting party was complete. A few hours later the battalion moved in. What seemed like an impossible task when we first saw the wrecked town was thus accomplished with comparative ease.

"In looking for houses we entered one very spacious home. It would have made an ideal command post, with plenty of elbowroom on the first floor for everyone to work. We hurried up to the second floor to see how many rooms were there and were met at the head of the stairs by a gray-haired old man in frock coat and his daughter. They seemed quite excited. Both began to speak at once, the aged man in German, and the young lady in English. We finally calmed them and got the complete story. By mistake troops had been quartered there the day before, but the Military Government had moved them out in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention that Church property was not to be used by troops.

"As a member of the billeting party I was a little disappointed; but as chaplain I was quite delighted. The church, being right next door to the Headquarters Company Command Post, solved the problem of where to hold services. However, before the church could be used, it had to be cleaned. Glass from the shattered windows was everywhere. One shell had hit the house on the north side of the church, pierced an outside wall and an inside wall, leaving holes through both about six inches in diameter. It hit the double wall where the house and church abut each other, tearing a cone-shaped hole through the double wall. The hole was about three feet in diameter on the side where the shell first hit and about five feet in diameter on the side where it came through. The shell continued across the church auditorium and penetrated the wall on the opposite side, just where the chimney goes up through the building. Here it again left a hole in the wall about six inches in diameter, but by that time it had spent its force and dropped down inside the chimney.

"It is one of those strange phenomena that can be seen repeatedly in a shelled area. As you step into the chapel, you look right into the large hole in the opposite wall. For a moment you are at a loss to explain it. But when you step over to examine it, you can see the two smaller holes in the other walls and trace the path of the shell. Sometimes you see a house with nothing but one wall standing — the rest of the house a heap of rubble. But on that wall still hangs the picture of a bridal couple. You wonder how long they were married; how many years of marital happiness and shared sorrows are buried in that rubbish heap.

"These rubbish heaps would be far more numerous were it not for the fireproof building materials used. Wood is scarce. Hence brick, concrete, mud, and stone are the common materials. This fact probably saved the church from complete destruction, for it was built of concrete brick, stuccoed on the outside. The brick that was torn away by the shell was pulverized — reduced to the sand and cement from which it was made. The air current created by the shell had taken the powdered brick and scattered it to a depth of about ⅛ inch over everything. Splinters of stained glass were liberally sprinkled in. A long pew with spindlelike back that stood against the wall and a dozen or more chairs were reduced to kindling and likewise strewn about. Other chairs had one leg or a piece of the back snapped off. Fragments from shells that hit across the street had put holes in the plaster of walls and ceiling, broken the glass in a picture of Christ that hung on the south wall, riddled the dossal curtain that hung behind the altar, and gouged splinters out of the floor.

"Two men from Headquarters Company and the chaplain's assistant went to work with brooms, brushes, and dustcloths. In about an hour there was some semblance of order. But it was still dusty from the powdered plaster. So I suggested getting a couple of pails of water from the Rhine and mopping the floor. I thought probably some of the women who were living in the parish house temporarily could do the work if the soldiers carried the water. The aged pastor smiled and said: 'Yes, they can do the work, but they will have to use rags, as they have no mops. The mops have worn out long ago, and there are no replacements. Everything has gone into the war machine.' He added:

'If you want to make a German housewife a very special gift, give her a common scrubbing mop.' With rags tied around worn-out brooms they mopped the floor, and with moistened cloths dusted the furniture. The green velvet parament was undamaged. It was taken outdoors and brushed thoroughly. The tall crucifix was unharmed. One of the candlesticks was broken. They had been only ornaments anyway, as we indicated; candles were not to be had.

"In the parsonage there were some of the civilians who were required to vacate their homes. One after another they came to the door of the chapel and looked in while the soldiers were working. They could not believe the report that the soldiers were cleaning up the chapel to use it for services. They had been told that the American soldiers were barbarians, who looted and plundered and destroyed the churches. In order that more of the townfolk might know that the American soldier goes to church, the pastor called my attention to the outdoor bulletin board and requested that I put an announcement there, where the civilians could also see it. This we gladly did. On Monday morning the pastor waited at the gate until I came by in order to tell me that he had received many favorable comments on the conduct of the American soldiers and that the service had done much to change the opinion of the people.

"With the debris removed and the cleaning done, we set the chairs in their accustomed place, put the altar parament and crucifix back, covered the unsightly hole in the wall with a tapestry, and the result was very pleasing. Many of the scars of war were still plainly visible, but it was a most welcome change from the attics, basements, and barns that had frequently served as churches. And then on Palm Sunday morning, about an hour before the service began, I happened to look out the rear window of our "apartment" and noticed that daffodils and forsythia were in bloom in the garden. Flowers on the altar has always been one of my weaknesses. You can imagine that very shortly there were flowers on the altar next door. When I went in to place the flowers on the altar, I found that the pastor had replaced the shell-torn dossal curtain with a beautiful maroon-colored tapestry. The effect was very colorful and gave an atmosphere of worship. I sat down for a few moments of silent prayer and meditation. I permitted my thoughts to carry me back to my beloved Concordia in Evansville. For a moment I almost became homesick.

"But fortunately the soldiers began to arrive for the service. As is my custom, I had extended an invitation to the neighboring units to worship with us if no other arrangements had been made for them. The chapel filled up rapidly, and we began to carry chairs. We finally had every chair in the building and needed more. So the local pastor directed our attention to some folding chairs in the basement. We brought these upstairs and filled the church auditorium. Some soldiers had to stand in the hallway, and some sat on their helmets in an adjoining room. The service itself did not differ too much from the service that we would have conducted back home. In the bulletin I gave a brief history of the congregation. Since then I have learned more and can elaborate here.

"The congregation was the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Honningen-Rhein. Originally members held their membership in the Linz congregation – a city not far away. But the Nazi regime frowned upon traveling from one city to another for church attendance and later began to refuse passes for such travel. The congregation at Linz then purchased the large home in Honningen, remodeled two of the rooms on the first floor into the chapel, and used the rest of the house as the parsonage and parish hall. There were about three hundred members in the Honningen congregation, and the building was adequate for that number.

"The pastor, the Rev. Theodor Barnem, had served a larger congregation in another city for a good many years and had retired. He returned to the active ministry in order to serve this congregation. He was now completing his 16th year there.

Naturally I was quite interested in knowing how the church work was carried on under the Nazi government. The pastor was very glad to tell me for two reasons: (1) that I might understand their difficulties; (2) that I would have a correct picture of conditions, because they had heard some reports on the picture that had been given America through the newspapers and by radio. He was afraid that the picture was a little too black. But I did not share this fear with him. I was inclined to believe that we had received understatements rather than overstatements. You can judge for yourself on the basis of the following information.

"As we indicated, it was Palm Sunday on which we used the chapel. In our Lutheran churches at home it is connected inseparably with confirmation. The congregation at Honningen also had a class ready for communicant membership, but the rite of confirmation had to be postponed because of the war. The instruction of the children was accomplished under great hardships. Printing of religious materials and books was forbidden. Hence there were no catechisms or Bibles to be had. Families that still had copies of the catechism were asked to lend them to the church for use of the confirmands. When these copies wore out, they finally resorted to the laborious task of dictating each part and having the children make their own copy by hand. New Bibles were not available, but there were always sufficient copies in the congregation for the children to use. It had been the custom of the church to give each bridal couple a copy of the Scriptures as a wedding present, but this had to be discontinued in the last three years, because the supply of Bibles was exhausted.

"The church was limited to purely religious activities. In previous years the young people's program was somewhat similar to the Walther League program, including both religious and social activities. But the Nazis forbade any social or welfare activity, because they wanted the people to believe that they received *everything* from the Party. At the meetings of the young people they could no longer play games or have light refreshments. The Party provided such activities. The young people's meetings were strictly a Bible Hour. They practiced the singing of hymns, had a prayer, and a meditation or Bible history.

"On Christmas it had been the custom of the pastor's wife to invite the Sunday school children to come about an hour before the program began and to serve cookies, candy, hot chocolate, or whatever was available. The Sunday school would present each child with a gift. This custom also had to be discontinued. They could still have their program and give a little gift, but the cookies, etc., came from the Nazi Party, not the Church.

"What welfare work was done, was done undercover. It sounds rather incongruous to speak of practicing Christian charity behind someone's back; but it is a hard truth.

"Attendance at the regular church services also dropped as time went on, and it became more and more predominantly women. The young men were drafted into the Army; the older men had to work; and the children usually had some sort of Hitler Youth activity. It was always stressed that the attendance of the children at Party affairs was voluntary. But if they were not a the Party meeting on Sunday morning, they suffered accordingly during the week from the ridicule and threats of the other children.

"Religious instruction was forbidden in the schools. Crucifixes and all religious symbols were removed from the schools and all public buildings. The Nazi Party was very thorough and very systematic in their training of the Hitler Youth. We have found that in practically every town where we have stopped in Germany the schoolteacher was a Party leader in the community. He virtually controlled the youth. Parents had little to say, even fearing their own children in some cases. As a result, the children have grown up to be haughty, self-willed, arrogant, and with the attitude that they know the answer to everything.

We tried an experiment on a group of nine youngsters in one town. They had congregated near our jeep, when the convoy halted for a short time, and were discussing the Americans. They did not know that I understood them. Suddenly I turned around, clicked my heels, gave the Nazi salute, and said: 'Heil Hitler!' Seven of the nine snapped to attention, clicked their heels, and started to give the salute before they realized what had happened, and sheepishly lowered their hands. The two who did not respond were evidently too young to belong to the Hitler Youth. So thorough had been their training that the response was automatic. None of the boys could have been more than twelve years old. To me it suggests a great lesson: Watch the training of the youth. It also indicates what tremendous task lies ahead for the Army of Occupation in trying to re-educate these people and stamp out the Nazi doctrine.

"Another example is the race consciousness with which they have been imbued. In billeting we frequently meet the argument that people should not be moved out of their homes because they are not German. One woman in particular pleaded, with tears in her eyes, that she was Swedish, not German; and America was not at war with Sweden. But her husband was German, she was naturalized and had lived in Germany for ten years; her two sons were member of the Hitler Youth. Yet she insisted she was Swedish, gave us her maiden name and the place of her birth to prove her point. We used her house.

"Saturday I was at the home of the burgomaster, and while someone went to call him, the children gathered around to give me the once over. I asked: 'Do you know what tomorrow is?' They answered: 'Easter.' I questioned them further on the meaning of Easter. Then I asked one of the smaller children whether they have eggs on Easter. I was greeted by a chorus of no's. One of the older boys straightened himself up, tilted his head back, and answered: 'They have nothing. They are not German.' The burgomaster's arrival prevented me from asking more questions, although I had many more that I wanted to ask.

"All these things made church work very difficult. The pastor, as leader of the congregation, suffered many hardships not only in his pastoral work, but also in his private life and family life. Frequently observers for the Party attended the services. It had been the custom of the pastor to announce the names of members who had been taken into custody by the Party because of their religious convictions and to indicate the location of the camp where they were being held. He would ask the prayers of the congregation for these members and then include a petition in the General Prayer for them. He followed that custom on the Sunday when the observer was present and the next day was summoned to appear at the Police Headquarters to explain. The Nazis interpreted the act as indicating the pastor believed the members were being mistreated by the Nazis. He persuaded them that that was not a logical conclusion and was released. But in the future he was to read the names of the members only, stating that they were absent, without giving any reason or mentioning their whereabouts.

"Further control was exercised by the Nazis through their good conduct fund. Each adult was required to contribute to this fund, and, if at the end of three years there is no record of any offense against the Nazi Party, the contribution is returned. The pastor said it may have been mere coincidence that the above occurred when his three-year period was about up. He had to make a new contribution.

His son was also in the ministry, but did not fare quite so well. He conducted a series of evangelistic services for a week and in one service stressed mission work. He referred to mission work that the German churches had done in Africa prior to the war and lamented the fact that it had to be interrupted. In so doing he placed the German race on a level with the colored races of Africa. From the Christian point of view, a very true statement, for they were all in need of Christ as their Savior. But from the Nazi point of view a direct denial of their theory of race superiority. Because similar statements had been misinterpreted in previous sermons, he was taken into custody on this occasion and sent to a concentration camp. Here he was not fed too well, and while not in ill health or real suffering, he lost weight, and his resistance was low. He was transferred to another camp some distance away in an unheated train. By the time he arrived at the new camp he had contracted a severe cold. This developed into pneumonia, from which he died.

"One week before we arrived in Honningen, the pastor had buried his wife, who died as a result of an artillery wound. When I learned this, I wanted to extend my sympathy as one Christian to another and add the comfort of the Gospel. But he stopped me and said: 'Sir, it is better so. She is safe in the arms of Jesus, with all her troubles at an end.' It was the triumph of Christian faith.

"I have written this account, because I think it brings home to us one of the reasons for which we fight. And I like to think of this pastor as exemplifying the hope of the German nation. In a sense he is our ally. He is German, it is true, living in Germany, yet fighting for the same freedoms for which we fight. Recognizing that discretion is the better part of valor, he fought with the means he had at hand. In keeping with the instructions of his Savior, he rendered unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. It was not always easy. Now he is 83 years old – at the close of a long life. But he has lived to see the forces of freedom once more rise victoriously over oppression. In the armed forces of the Allies he sees the tool by which the Nazi regime goes down to defeat before the Conquering Christ."

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South Pacific

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Wilfred J. Schnedler

When the first assault was made in New Guinea, Chaplain Wilfred J. Schnedler was in the vanguard. The troops went in to establish a hold the hard way. The barge which carried Chaplain Schnedler was hit by a Japanese shell and sunk so speedily that all the possessions which Chaplain Schnedler had taken with him were lost. His Communion set, his personal effects, his precious books, including his Bible, all went to the bottom of the sea. Interviewing Chaplain Schnedler, one of our press correspondents reported his classic statement, "I lost everything except my religion." While serving in New Guinea, Chaplain Wilfred J. Schnedler gave the following interesting account.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

"I was in the midst of taking a bath out of a steel helmet when a burst of Japanese fire crashed through the palm trees around us – too close for comfort – and I had to 'hit the dirt.' This happened – of all times – on Christmas morning.

"Let me tell you about our Christmas. The day dawned bright and hot. It was like July back home. Firing up front was rather heavy. I spent most of the morning at the hospital, for the wounded have filtered back, and then wrote a letter for an officer – his last letter home, for he died that night. Bursts of firing were quite prominent all through the day. How the men sang and listened at all the services!

"And the night before – Christmas Eve – was perhaps the most memorable any of us have ever experienced. The men had come straight from the front lines to hear about 'peace on earth, good will to men.' It was a tremendously solemn hour. The service was delayed for a time by an air alert, but finally got under way. We sang the Christmas carols from memory. The Christmas story held a new meaning for these men who had come from their jungle bivouac.

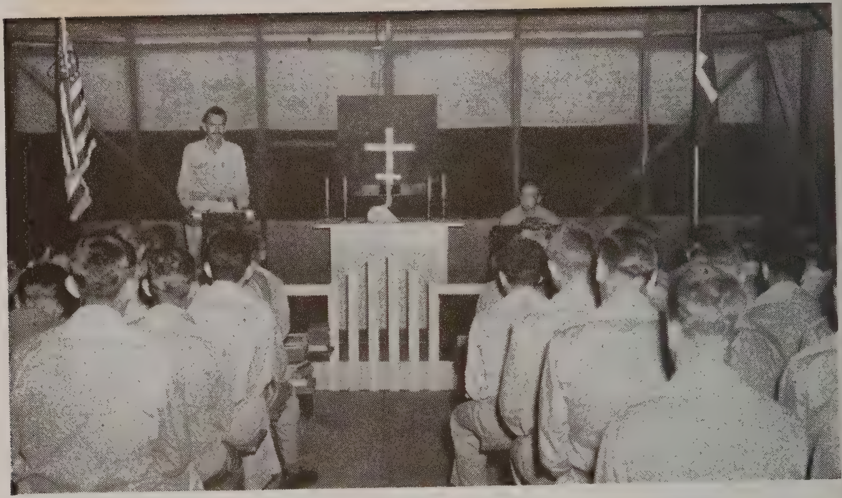
"From this service we went to a portable hospital. It was now pitch dark. The jungle was so dense that we could not look through the foliage to the stars overhead. Doctors and attendants gathered in the center of the tented hospital, sang carols, and again heard the Christmas message. Not a sound came from the cots of the surrounding sick and wounded, who drank in every word.

"That night, Christmas Eve, it was too late to go back to my own bivouac. So I lay down on a cot in one of the hospital tents and went to sleep with thoughts of Christmas at home. I was definitely homesick.

"We heard no choirs during the night. The only music was our own artillery to the rear, 'tossing them in' Tojo's positions, to keep him awake and bothered. He sent his planes over our lines at intervals. They unloaded their bombs, but none dropped near enough to cause us to 'hit the dirt.' Anyway, it was my first night on a cot in more than a month, and I made the most of it.

"And so Christmas has come and gone to the men in New Guinea. To men hungry, tired, sick, and living in the shadow of death it has still been a blessed Christmas. We thank God for having had a small part in bringing to them the peace and comfort of the Christ Child."

"Somewhere in the Pacific" Chaplain Karl A. Tubesing Conducts Divine Worship



Somewhere in New Guinea Chaplain George Mennen Conducts Services

WORSHIP AMID ROAR OF GUNS

Walter C. Gerken

"Erwin was sleeping as I approached, and I had to awaken him. Tears of joy flowed down his face when I announced that I was a chaplain of his Church. He was lonesome and knew no one.

"Erwin had been at the front. He and two comrades had suddenly discovered themselves surrounded for three hours by enemies and counted twelve points from which the firing came. They were sure of certain death or capture, but all prayed earnestly. The Lord in His mercy miraculously preserved all three. Needless to say, Erwin, who is on the road to recovery, was deeply moved when I gave him Holy Communion.

"The foregoing happened at one of the nineteen outposts I visit here in the South Pacific.

"Parents and loved ones undoubtedly will be interested to know how a chaplain serves his men here in the wilds. As we arrive at a distant outpost, the call goes out: 'The chaplain is here!' Mail and magazines are delivered first. If the folks back home could see just once the smiles when letters are received, they would think it shameful not to write. Letters are read and reread, and the men of our Church who receive *Loyalty – Christ and Country* from your Synod's Commission each month devour it earnestly – hymns, prayer, and sermon.

"Then opportunity is given the men to come to the chaplain with their problems or, if they have none, just to talk. Today three men came to me with the sad news that loved ones – a parent of each – had died at home. One soldier had divorce trouble. Many are homesick. Some are afraid. All kinds of troubles they discuss with the chaplain and seem relieved after talking with a pastor.

"After the evening meal we prepare for divine services. I get ready my oil drum in lieu of an altar — sometimes the front of a jeep, the back of a pickup, a wooden box, anything that is available — set up the Communion and altar set from Synod's Army and Navy Commission, drape the whole with an altar cloth (a clean mattress cover), and don my gown.

"Then Church Call is blown — and what a welcome sight greets a person! Ninety-nine per cent of the men who are at liberty to attend services are present. All appreciate the preaching of the Gospel. 'These Lutherans preach real,' one of them said. They have asked me to repeat a sermon on 1 Corinthians 15:1-10 a number of times.

"Often our worship is interrupted by the sound of firing and the drone of airplanes; also by an Australian Salvationist exclaiming forcefully and suddenly: 'Amen, preacher, you're right there; A-m-e-n!'

"There are many individual ministrations. A message comes from a Lutheran man in the hospital who desires Communion. Upon entering, I find two of the men from my unit there. I tell them I'll be back as soon as I see this Lutheran lad. 'Oh, preacher, don't go — I need you' comes the crying mumble from one of my men.

"I call the nurse and ascertain that the Lutheran soldier is convalescing and need not hurry — so I stay with Tom a little while. He has just discovered, upon coming out of the ether, that, in addition to his other discomforts, part of his hand had been amputated to prevent spreading of infection from gunshot wounds. After enlarging a little on 'All things work together for good to them that love God' and praying with him, he smiles and goes to sleep.

"The rest of the afternoon I spend there at the hospital, where casualties from the fighting front are treated. Many of the men are satisfied just to hold the chaplain's hand.

"There is a great deal more to tell, but time and space do not allow. Suffice it to say that I am more convinced than ever that the chaplaincy is a glorious work."

PHILIPPINE GLIMPSES

Walter A. Huchthausen

"Maybe you have had occasion to read a good deal about the doings of the 6th Division and particularly about the 1st Infantry during this campaign. (It's not over, by a long way, in spite of the patriotic mouthings of the commentators I have heard occasionally!) You know, of course, that I'm with the 6th Division Headquarters as Special Troops Chaplain. But very near the start of the campaign Chaplain Stroup of Harper's fame was recalled to Washington, and I had to take his place, so that the front-line troops might be assured a chaplain. Since then I've been with the 1st Infantry in every action involving the 1st Battalion. The outfit has done a magnificent job; but it has been a grueling experience for everyone. In one rather famous action, which was probably much touted in the newspapers because of its historic background, we were pretty near the end of our endurance. Walking those many miles across the mountains was tough. We were nearing our final objective, when I noticed that the men were about to give out. I took the medical officer along, and together we trudged down the line past the boys until we came to the 'point.' There we stayed the rest of the way and, together with the Colonel, we vanguarded the march to the objective. And we met no opposition! The next morning I induced the CO to speak to his assembled troops, after which we had a service of thanksgiving there in the ruins of a centuries-old church beside the sea. We had come through this action with few casualties, and we had accomplished our mission with remarkable speed. We were devoutly thankful.

"After that we really began to fight! Last night our Battalion ceased hostilities, while other outfits went on. Maybe we'll get a short rest now. But during this long action I've been quite busy. If I wasn't having services with a little group here and a little group there on the top of some mountain peak, there were the wounded and the sick to minister to. One day I was taking a medic and some Filipino litter bearers up to a company in action. It was a hard climb up a high mountain along a trail which at times seemed to go straight up. I had just reached the hip of the last rise, when a 'woodpecker' opened up on us. Well, I have a rather conspicuously long nose; I fear that I used even that implement to dig just a little deeper the slight depression into which I was fortunate enough to drop. We all stayed there until some gallant lieutenant silenced the annoyance. Yesterday I was able – actually the first time in a week – to have services in Company areas once again. My driver managed to get me up to the peak where I wanted to have my first service. To the left was the view of the valley that would take your breath away. To the left front there were continuous time bursts over an adjoining peak. To the front another Battalion was in action with the enemy. Behind us some guerrillas were burying the enemy dead. We retired to the reverse slope of our mountain and had a service while all this was going on. We had a fine attendance, and afterwards some of our Lutheran boys received the Lord's Supper. (The Colonel told me afterwards that he had seen all of this from another peak and had taken a picture of the proceedings.) From there my driver and I clambered to the next peak for another service. We had just said the Introit, when there was that unmistakable screaming whistle and that hideous cracking roar that precedes by seconds the awareness of a shell burst. By a sort of reflex action one seems to develop, everyone hit a foxhole, everyone, that is, except we who were about our devotions. After the Introit I asked a platoon sergeant whether he thought we ought to disperse. He looked around at the men, looked at me, and merely shook his head. So we went on to the conclusion of a fine service. Afterwards we looked across to the next peak about 200 yards away; three shells had landed just a short distance from the scene of the first service I had held! And not one of our boys was hit! That, I should say, is the evidence of divine protection in the midst of battle.

"So we have been going on. I could give you a lot of other items, some of which indicate too forcibly for mere words the magnificence of the providence of our Lord and the deep faith of some of our boys — faith as simple in texture as steel, and as keen — but I fear that I have rambled enough. The rest I had last night has fixed me up in good shape. I still have a lot of routine matters to take care of, plus some letters of condolence. Then I'll go back to the troops, with whom I'll probably stay until the campaign is closed."

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Hospital Ministry

SICKBED SIDELIGHTS

Henry F. Gerecke

It does not happen frequently that a chaplain continues to serve with the same outfit during his whole military career; yet such is the case of Chaplain Henry F. Gerecke, who received his first assignment during the fall of 1943 with the 98th General Hospital. He went into training with his unit at Fort Jackson, S. C., and continued there until May of 1944, when this hospital was alerted, and it found itself on its way to England. Thus the hospital was in readiness for the great D-Day invasion of Normandy, standing by to care for the casualties which would come from this all-out endeavor to dislodge the Nazi war machine from France. Many and varied have been the experiences of this chaplain in the discharge of his personal ministry to the men confined and allotted to this base hospital. Some of the sidelights of the chaplain's experience in ministering to the sick, to the wounded, and to the dying are set forth in these stories as recorded by Chaplain Gerecke.

SMITH AND SMITH

"Officers by the same name, pilots on different transports, were numbered among the wounded in our hospital at the same time. Henry Smith lay near death's door for a week, the victim of nasty shrapnel. His special nurse, a fine Christian woman, asked him to allow me to call for a short prayer session. Breathing heavily and in short jerks, he prayed the Lord's Prayer with me. During this prayer session the nurse and I had dropped to our knees. Henry remarked that it was the first devotion he had ever made or had ever taken part in. Daily devotional talks for several weeks convinced me that Henry trusted the merits of Jesus for his complete redemption. Ten P. M. was our prayer hour, and he would not fall asleep until I had held it with him.

"Captain Smith, a transport pilot, landed his crew in a burning ship, but was trapped by the flames. Everything went blank. He remembered asking God to spare him. What he doesn't remember is the fact that shortly after the ground crew dragged him out of the plane, it blew up. When he came to, he found himself enveloped with bandages. Face and both hands were covered, and he could not see. We found him in agony. A friendly nurse had discovered that his 'dog-tag' placed him in the Protestant group. After a few introductory remarks, we were on matters of prayer, asking God to help this young father whose lovely wife and little child are awaiting his ultimate return home. The Holy Ghost put Gospel sunshine into his lonely heart, and he now lives in the joy of forgiveness.

"GOD, HELP ME TO SEE AGAIN!"

"My friendly medic pointed to a bed halfway down the ward and said, 'Bed number —. He arrived this morning with a serious head injury. The operation was successful, but his sight is gone. He's trying to speak now. That fellow will need all the Gospel cheer you can give him.' A few questions revealed that this wounded soldier was a Missouri Synod Lutheran from Nebraska. When we discovered that he had made his confirmation in the German language, we tried our tongue on the business at hand in the form of a simple devotion. God forgive the mistakes we made. This soldier wouldn't let go our hand. He kept saying, 'God, help me to see again!' When he left our institution of healing for another, he couldn't see, but he could give you the sweetest smile you ever saw. He is concerned about the reception at home and wonders if his sweetheart will still want to marry him. The assurance of God's love was given him that 'underneath are the Everlasting Arms.' This young man will need the prayers of God's people to carry on.

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

"It is indeed gratifying to be assigned to a hospital unit whose personnel co-operates generously with its chaplains. A double signal on our phone brings the voice of a nurse who is concerned about a wounded soldier in her ward. She says he is too far gone to realize my presence, but I might try speaking with him. Amidst the doctors, nurses, and corpsmen I finally found my way to the dying man's ear. The moment he heard, 'God bless you, son,' he responded with a sad look, studied the insignia on my cap, and at once went on to tell me he had been brought up in a Christian home. He received the assurance of the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus, his Savior and Redeemer. After I whispered the Lord's Prayer into his ear, he went on alone into the 23d Psalm. At the end of the session he said, 'I'm mighty glad my parents raised me in the meaning of Christian faith.' When another hypo was attempted, he told the doctors they were wasting their time; he knew this was the last. While he was dying, I heard him whisper, 'The Lord is *my* Shepherd.' Godly parents will meet that son again in a world without sin and pain.

"AM I GOING TO DIE?"

"I heard the sound of heavy breathing in a little room near the door. The oxygen mask was being adjusted by an understanding nurse. When she looked at me, I knew there was every indication of a seriously ill soldier in that room. He caught me bending over him and put this question: 'Chaplain, am I going to die?' For a split second it had me stumped. The medic standing near us waited for my answer. The nurse was about to answer the soldier when the doctor placed his hand over her mouth with a look that seemed to say, 'Let's hear what the Padre has to say.' She apologized later for this bit of rudeness, however, and it was evident that she meant no harm. In my mind I was praying God to help me form an answer, and this is what happened. I said, 'God's children never die.' Up to that point the little room was filled with every available personnel in the ward. In a moment they were all gone, and I told this twenty-year-old soldier the story of the Cross; how heaven's gate was opened by trusting Jesus, who died for him; that all of God's precious promises were true. I said, 'Will you put it this way to your Lord right now and let me have the pleasure of hearing you say it: Jesus, I trust Thee. Keep me safe for heaven.' He repeated these words after me. It was our last meeting.

"MY NUMBER"

"Sometimes, under the most serious circumstances a patient will bring forth a remark one never forgets. A colored soldier, severely wounded, asked for a New Testament. The presentation of this precious little book furnished the right approach to a short spiritual session. After a few questions it was evident that the man was a Christian. We read a brief portion of the Bible and ended our meeting with a prayer, asking forgiveness of all sins and placing him into the Savior's arms. If 'de Lawd' would let him live, he would be a better man, would work for the 'Lawd' and bring up his children in Sunday school and church. Thought he might become a preacher after the war. Well, he was very low, and we left him in God's grace. The next day the nurse reported the following incident: 'Nurse, Nurse! You know something? My number is up. The chaplain done prayed for me!' He is recovering beautifully.

ATHEISTS

"Among the many wounded who have spent time in our hospital I have met three self-styled atheists. The one saw me several beds away and yelled, 'Don't bother about me, I'm an atheist.' The other refused a devotional booklet with a smile and suggested I spend my time elsewhere; while the third said, 'I had no time for religion while I was home, and I'm not giving it consideration until I return. Maybe I'm another atheist.' I prayed with the men next to their beds while holding devotions with them. I failed to win any of these atheists.

"HE'S LUTHERAN"

" 'Chaplain,' said our Jewish medic, "there's a fine lad in my ward who carries his church identification on his dog chain. It says something about notifying a Lutheran chaplain in case of accident. He is one swell Christian soldier.' We had a friendly chat and a short devotional. I had seen him before, but he was still under. You see, I have the names of every patient in our hospital, his bed number, and his church affiliation. In most cases I know the denominational background. However, the doctor beat me to this one. I know this young man will make good in spite of missing one leg. Incidentally, the Army and Navy Commission sent me his name a few days after he was released to another hospital. He's a credit to his Church and a witness for the Lord under all circumstances. He had only praise for the work of the Commission in its mission to Lutheran men in the service. Keep up the good work!

CHAPEL PRAYERS

"Every noon at 1245 hours it becomes my privilege to hold chapel prayers. My clerk, who is an excellent musician, does Gospel hymns for a background while I read a brief Scripture portion and pray the prayers arranged for that day. It makes your heart skip a beat to see enlisted men, nurses, doctors, and a few patients on their knees speaking to God during this ten-minute period of daily devotions. Between prayers there's a 'Be still and know that I am God' silence while soft music fills the air with familiar Gospel melodies. Names of the seriously sick are handed to me, while others speak with me concerning their loved ones scattered all over the world. It's the sweetest ten-minute period in the whole day. The kneeling bench belongs to the friendly neighborhood vicar. Some of the same personnel attend every noon, and the total for the average month is about 160. The sick of our hospital are remembered every day, especially those who are seriously ill. Prayers for the sick ones here are my very own and are *ex corde* to the *nth* degree. Lighted candles furnish the devotional setting.

IN THE OPERATING ROOM

"Some medics would like the chaplain near by while they operate. To give a wounded soldier courage on the basis of precious Bible promises while he is going under for a serious operation is something he never forgets.

"Pete was 'out' when they carried him in. The doctor said he would probably die on the table. I asked God to spare Pete that his soul might be safe for heaven. That kind of praying went on for three hours – silently, of course. Pete has since made a recommitment of his vows to the Lord. His remark 'I wasn't ready' would indicate how dangerously close he was. God's mercy be praised!"

A LAST PRAYER

L. Winfield Wickham

ANOTHER CHAPLAIN PERFORMING BEDSIDE MINISTRY is L. Winfield Wickham. This hospital chaplain sent this telling account submitted by a patient. It demonstrates the power of the Word of God:

"One night, a short while ago, there was a good friend of mine up on the front lines. On this certain night the situation was very desperate. In fact, time was getting short for a lot of us. Bombs were dropping, artillery firing, shells bursting. The sky was all lit up by fire and shell bursts. Some men were praying, men were crying, others were dying, and the situation looked very bad for the time being. This good friend in a foxhole was having quite a time with himself. All of his buddies were asking God for strength and courage and to have mercy on their souls. And all of a sudden he realized he had no one to call on. He had never prayed or taken time to study the Word of God. When all his buddies were asking for help from God, there he was all alone, with no one to call on. About that time there came a heavy barrage of artillery close to his foxhole. This time it hit his buddy in the same foxhole, and this buddy was dying. He asked God with his last breath to have mercy on his soul and save him. Then he died with a smile on his face. This friend could not understand how a man could die smiling. He could not understand what that last prayer did for the dying man. If he only knew what security that man died with. The last I saw of my friend he was talking with the chaplain, wanting the security God offered."

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Ministry to Prisoners of War

IN ENGLAND

Otto E. Kohn

BORN IN CHICAGO, ILL., on Nov. 26, 1893, attending Concordia College at Milwaukee, Wis., graduating from Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Ill., in the year 1915, Chaplain Otto E. Kohn was pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church at Chaska, Minn., when he received his commission as chaplain in the Army of the United States. He was ordered to duty on Sept. 3, 1942, first attending the Chaplains' School at Harvard University and upon graduation being assigned to the Post Headquarters at Camp Hale, Pando, Colo. He established a fine record of service with the American troops at this station. After he had served at Camp Hale for over a period of one year, the first German prisoners arrived. Since Chaplain Kohn was able to preach in the German language, he was assigned to look after the spiritual well-being of the Nazi prisoners. His aptitude in dealing with them was instantly recognized, and so we find him also doing this work when he was transferred with his organization to England, where today he is continuing to perform a very splendid service in behalf of the station complement and the prisoners of war who are detained in England.

A detailed account of his work is given in the following story. "Ours is a transient camp, where newly arrived prisoners of war are processed and made ready for transfer either to the United States or to labor units at various places in the United Kingdom. It is needless to say that thousands of prisoners, both officers and enlisted men, have passed through our camp or have been detained for certain special reasons.

"Among these prisoners we find people of all walks of civilian life: Ministers, medical men, teachers, businessmen, etc. Also chaplains (*Wehrmachtsgeistliche*) of the Evangelical and Catholic faiths. These have passed through our gates. Aside from the regular army chaplains, many of the enlisted men were ministers by vocation. At present two officers, a Lt. Col. (regular army chaplain) and a Lt. (line officer), are employed as my assistants, also an *Unteroffizier,* who made his final examination at the seminary while already in the army. These are men of sound theology. Their sermons offer real spiritual meat. Not this political nonsense, not the Goethe specialty, which leaves a man so cold and unsatisfied in the inner man. I am very happy to have these men with me as my helpers in this work. It was necessary to have these men, as I could hardly carry on alone any longer with the heavy schedule I had. Our services among the prisoners had grown larger and larger from Sunday to Sunday. To do justice and to serve all prisoners the better, weekday services and lectures were regarded essential. It was here that the much-needed help was most appreciated in getting men of sound Christian faith to assist from among the prisoners themselves. Our attendances have been astounding as my December report has indicated. During that month 46 Lutheran services were conducted, with an attendance of 10,639. It may be added here that as Post Chaplain I have to co-ordinate the Catholic and other denominational services as well. Forty-one non-Lutheran services were conducted during the same month of December, with 6,080 in attendance.

"When new arrivals come, I make it a point to be present as often as possible. At this time the church services are announced. Notices are also posted in a conspicuous place in the dining room, which room is then used for the services. It is clearly stated that churchgoing is not compulsory, but also that it is not to be interfered with by anti-church men. The response to church services as well as lectures has been most satisfying.

"As stated above, for a long time these services were conducted by me. It is no simple matter to preach six, ten, and more times in one day. But it was done even though the vocal cords revolted and reacted. My position makes it possible to contact every minister that passes through here, to question him as to his church connection and affiliation. I have made this observation: A *few* of them cling to the true faith; *more* of them want to please the political as well as the Christian groups; *most* of them are died-in-the-wool *Nazi.* These men are sorted and, when found true, are assigned to work among labor groups. That is another one of my duties: to co-ordinate the religious work in the various labor units throughout the United Kingdom.

"Prisoners-of-war work is not appreciated by many chaplains. It's a fifth-wheel-on-the-wagon job. Nobody wants it – but it is important beyond measure. When we consider that 60 per cent of the ministers in Germany are gone and that since 1936, and even before, no theological schools were open, no course given, no students graduated, we can realize what the ministerial situation in Germany will be after the war. Besides, the German people seem no longer to know much about religion and for the last two or three decades have not been offered much religion. These facts came to light recently and very forcefully when we conducted lectures on the following topics: The Liturgy; The Church; Who Belongs to the Church. With tears in their eyes men came to shake our hands and begged for more such lectures, stating that it is opening their eyes as never before. With God's help they shall have these lectures every week. Think what our Lutheran Church can do for these people! We, the children of the Reformation, can bring back a reformation to the motherland of the Reformation. What an opportunity!

'It would be desirable for our Christian country to make it possible for theological students to continue their studies by placing all of them in a separate camp and providing them with good teachers. Something like that must be done if we are to help the people of Germany to find their Savior.

"Prisoners have begged me to send Bibles to their families back home. Some of them have bought German Bibles in France, while on duty there, and have sent them home. Germany had stopped printing Bibles. Here they readily take prayer books, devotional booklets, whenever offered. I cannot keep a sufficient supply. May our Board send plenty of such material even if the chaplain does not put in a monthly requisition. How I wish I had more theological works like Pieper's *Dogmatics,* Stoeckhardt's *Roemerbrief,* etc.

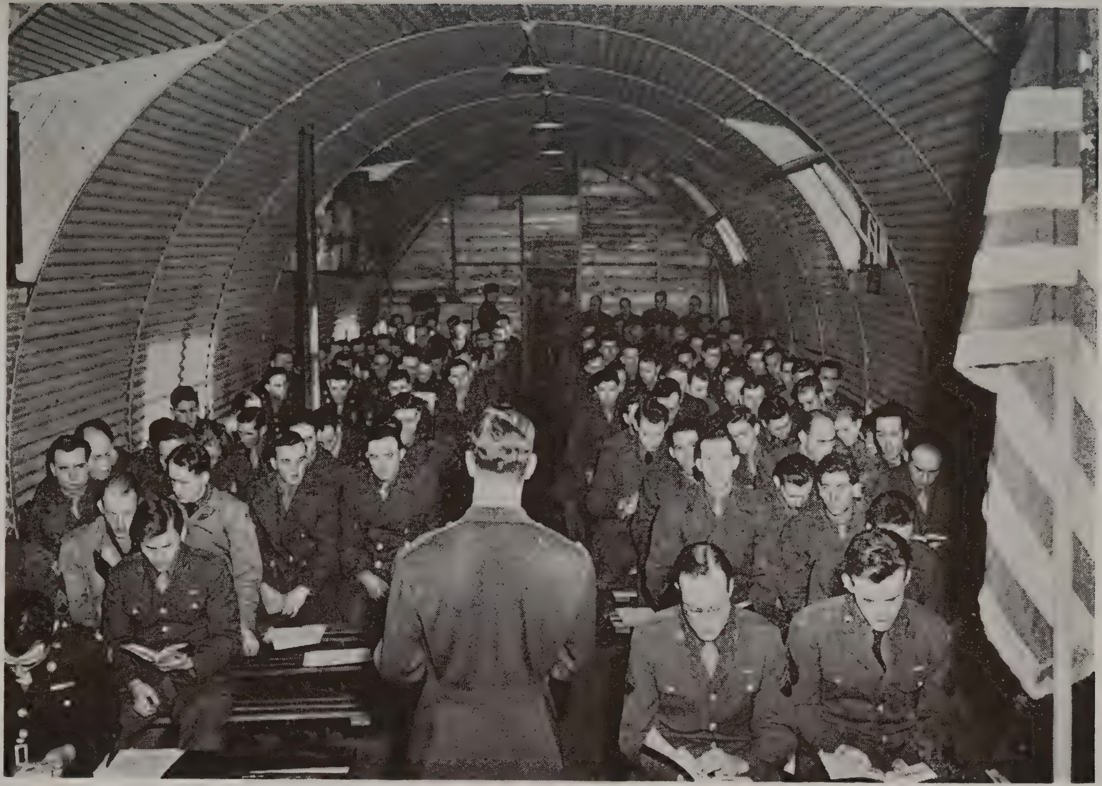
"We are now preparing and mimeographing sermon helps for ministers on duty in other labor units. These men have no sermonic material other than what I gave them, which was very little. I enclose a copy of what we are doing. Recently a full service has been taken for phonograph and radio reception. I have a set of these plates and hope to send them on to you. It was a New Year's Eve Service with full liturgy. I believe your heart will rejoice to hear this record.

'Though I have been one of your silent workers, nevertheless I have worked diligently. May the Lord bestow His blessing on what was here sown."

A PRISONER MEETS GOD

Henry C. Wolk, Jr.

"Late one evening as I was sitting in the orderly room at MP Headquarters, two Service Command MP's entered with a surly looking soldier. They had picked him up for being AWOL. Obviously, he didn't like it a bit and was very defiant and un-co-operative as the necessary papers were filled out prior to his confinement. In the ensuing investigation, it was



Overseas, Icelandic Services, Chaplain Clarence F. Golisch Conducts Services

Reading the roll and assigning men to their cars on the troop train at Fort Hayes, Columbus, Ohio. Before this official last act Chaplain Louis W. Wickham speaks to the men, commending them to the care of Almighty God and urging revealed that this soldier had been confined once before in an Army Stockade and that he had assaulted a guard and made a successful escape. The Army charged him with desertion. During the days preceding the trial I saw him every day and attempted to engage him in conversation. At my suggestion that he pray with me about this whole matter, decide to take his medicine, and then win back his right to be a soldier, he said that it was too late for him to change now. He had messed up his life and was not worried about the consequences. Others tried to show him that his attitude was all wrong, but it made no impression on him. When he was tried by court martial, his sentence included a dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances due or to become due, and 15 years hard labor at a Disciplinary Barracks. He was then returned to the Base Stockade to await shipment to the Disciplinary Barracks. During the following days he remained sullen and uncommunicative. Then, one day, he received a letter from a stranger telling him that his parents were still alive and were trying to get in touch with him. We investigated this letter and through military channels established the identity of his parents. He was allowed to speak by long-distance telephone to his father, whose voice he had not heard for over twenty years. He discovered for the first time that he had been using the name of his maternal grandmother as his last name instead of his father's name.

"It was revealed that shortly before his birth his parents had been separated and later divorced. After the death of his mother, Jack, as we shall call him, had been reared by his grandmother and had seen his father only once, and then only as a 'friend of the family.' Supervision at his grandmother's home was lax, and it was not long before Jack was getting himself into trouble with neighborhood gangs, and finally, when he was about 14 years old, he ran away from home. He stayed away, bumming around the country, until his enlistment in the Army.

"Having established contact with his father, who had remarried, established a good business, acquired a fine home and three daughters, Jack entered a new thought-world. Here was the family unit to which he belonged, to which he was responsible, and which, above all, was desirous of accepting him again as a son and brother. Arrangements were made to allow members of the family to visit him. Their regular correspondence cheered him and gave him a new lease on life. Jack was convinced that divine intervention had caused this 'miracle.' He was now inquisitive about God, prayer, and wondered whether the love of God could also include him. He began to attend church regularly. When I discovered that he had not been baptized, I asked whether he would be interested in receiving instructions which would prepare him for that Sacrament. He said that he wished to begin immediately; so we arranged a schedule of instructions which would be concluded with Holy Baptism at the time when his parents would be with him.

"During the next few weeks the other prisoners witnessed a transformation in the life of a hard and dangerous young man. Sallman's Head of Christ appeared above his bunk. The Bible and Catechism were on his shelf. He began to read religious poetry. He walked away when he heard profanity. He prayed regularly. He wore the Lutheran emergency medallion around his neck.

"At last the great day came when he was to meet his newly discovered parents. It was indeed a touching sight. In spite of the condition in which they found their son, they could not show him enough love nor express their joy adequately at having found him. The attitude of Jack's stepmother was especially commendable, for she showed every evidence of love and concern for the welfare of her new and only son. After lengthy discussions with these fine people I was assured that their love would henceforth strengthen Jack in his efforts to gain their respect and confidence and to prove himself worthy of the love which they were giving so generously.

"On the day of the Baptism I ordered an Army sedan, and, accompanied by an armed guard, Jack and his parents drove to the Base Chapel. One of our chaplain's assistants played the organ softly as we entered the chapel, proceeded to the front, and took our positions at the altar. Before Jack stood the crucifix. Behind him was a big, burly, armed guard. At the proper time Jack knelt down and took the baptismal vows, renouncing sin, and promising to embrace Christ even unto death. A chill passed through my body as I listened to his voice. At the benediction I could see the tears on his cheeks, and as he arose, he went immediately to his stepmother and cried in her arms. The brawny guard could not hide his tears either. Then Jack's father joined the embracing couple; the three of them clung together, and with their grasps of love pledged their hearts to each other.

"In the days preceding his shipment to the Disciplinary Barracks another wonderful thing happened to Jack. His sentence was reduced to five years. He was also told that with good behavior and lots of hard work he could be restored to full military service in much less time than that. He read and re-read his daily mail from home and mounted photos of his family in a treasured album. For all this happiness he gave thanks to God. Arrangements were made with his home pastor to enroll him as a member of a Christian congregation. The Adjutant General also issued authorization for Jack to assume his father's name. Legally and spiritually he now bore the proper marks of identification.

"Jack met his Savior and straightened out his life in an Army prison. And with his Savior he is on his way back to full duty for God and country."

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Ringside Seat—African Invasion

DIVERSIFIED SERVICE RECORD

Richard A. Tschirley

SINCE 1937 CHAPLAIN RICHARD A. TSCHIRLEY has established a record of diversified service. His commission was granted on July 15, 1937. His first assignment was at Fort George Wright in the State of Washington. During the year 1940 he was ordered to active duty with the Headquarters of the 15th Infantry, being a member of the Chaplains' Reserve Corps. After a period of service at Fort Lewis, Wash., we find him on his way on that momentous occasion when the American troops landed in Africa to break the Nazi power. Chaplain Tschirley had a ringside seat and gave a graphic description of the initial invasion of Africa. He saw service in Italy and has completed two and one-half years of overseas service.

Several accounts gleaned from Chaplain Tschirley's letters follow.

AFRICA

"A word or two from the front here in Africa. As can be seen from the report, our work is carried on here in blessing. A few details may not be out of place. The journey across from Camp Pickett took fifteen days. During the journey, on which the transport was tossed about considerably on a few stormy days, services were held in the Navy's personnel mess hall, the only place affording adequate facilities on board, on Sundays and Wednesday evenings. They were well attended, and Communion services were provided for men of the Navy as well as the Army. Some of the Navy men in particular had not had opportunity to commune for a long time; so they appreciated the opportunity.

"Upon reaching our goal, the naval battle, about which the news reached the States, broke out. It was an amazing sight to see and to be a witness right in the midst of it. The blazing salvos from the naval ship's guns, the twisting and writhing of the monsters, in some cases in mortal combat, the anti-aircraft fire, with the resultant wisps of parachutelike smoke hanging about in the sky near attacking planes dropping their bombs and strafing our troops, making for the shore, their protecting curtains and screens and the constant hazard — things that cannot be pictured by words. It was almost too fantastic to be real and seemed all like a monstrous nightmare of hell itself.

"During the battle, when its center seemed to have moved off, I had a service announced over the ship's communication system and expected a handful to show up, which might break away from the engaging spectacle, but to my surprise the mess hall was filled to capacity. God's protecting care was acknowledged and His continued grace besought and the congregation directed to His present help in every trouble. Never a service like that one, and none can ever be like it again!

"No Sunday has passed since our landing without a service — rain or shine. Men soldier in rain, and they turn out for services in rain. As you will see, there have been Baptisms of an officer of the staff and of an enlisted man. Instructions had to be in the confines of a pup tent or out in the open. At present two others are under instruction for Baptism, for which an enlarged and 'luxuriously' equipped tent is serving, and in it is a home-made kerosene lamplet, made from a condensed milk can, which gives light.

"The altar is frequently the rear of an amphibian jeep, upon which a piece of rayon velvet brought from the States and added to your chaplain's kit is placed with the cross and candles upon it. A very churchly note and atmosphere is thus created in God's own open air. The equipment provided serves well — and the Communion vessels upon it on the occasion of the Lord's Supper, which is celebrated frequently, makes the arrangement complete.

"May the Lord guide and protect the living among us and bring them safely home!"

ITALY

Serving with a station hospital in Italy, Chaplain Tschirley wrote in a recent letter:

"It is a notable day — the most springlike day of the late winter of this year — the day also on which four years ago I started on what has turned out to be a colossal nightmare and on an odyssey that, I am sure, has 'out-odysseyed' that of Ulysses — only there's no Homer to glamorize it. I went on leave from my former assignment for a year! So that fits, too; into the nightmare it has been.

"Shadows there must be, of course, and perusal of casualty lists of *Loyalty News* make them rather intense. There are many in there whose lives touched mine very closely along the way. And yet through and behind the shadows shines the radiance of a better day for them and for me for having come along with them. Along in the shadow there is your reference to my landing in Tunisia. While I 'landed' there a month or so before the campaign ended, my original landing was in darkness on Fedala's shores — not too far from Casa Blanca, Morocco.

"Whatever it is in the larger picture, at the time it seemed a little ironical that, having landed up there in Tunisia, I should after the end of the campaign there, or at least after the enemy's capitulation there, become hospitalized, which began a hospital odyssey I am still on. Due to our shortsightedness, we thought that might be the beginning of the end. If it was that, the ending is much longer than we surmised it would be.

"All in all, it has had in it the elements of another lifetime, with so much and so many things happening at so many places from Morocco to Italy and intermediate points and the Palestinian excursion — and a pretty full lifetime condensed into less than 2½ years. A chaplain, I think, must get more of its fullness and of its intensities and length and breadths than others, because of his peculiar position and contacts. Heights before unattained — that take you 'way up and up and up — and depths as no depths could have ever been imagined for downright dark depths — were in there along the way. And a fullness of hopes that hasn't been funny, but maybe will be when they can be looked back to in the past.

"Somewhere in there and along the way memorials have risen as we go over the way, memorials that have already begun to glow in hallowed remembrance, memorials that man's hands cannot build, but which lowly and good soldiers have left, memorials telling of loyalty and devotion and steadfastness when the going was hard and the steps rugged and it seemed there wasn't strength to make it. Hardness as only soldiers can know hardness and trials as only soldiers can be tried were in there to help rear these memorials. And God's own strengthening and comfort and help, as only God can strengthen and comfort and help, were in there, too. So they glow in hallowed remembrance through the darkness of it all and tell of a better day for them and for us."

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Continental Air Forces

IN THE "SANCTUM SANCTORUM"

Eugene J. Graebner

COMMISSIONED A CHAPLAIN in the Chaplains' Reserve Corps on May 23, 1936, Chaplain Eugene J. Graebner was assigned to the Army Air Force on Nov. 15, 1940, coming to the chaplaincy from the Atlantic District of the Missouri Synod. Chaplain Graebner saw an extended period of service with the American Army Air Force in England and, having been returned to the homeland, was assigned to the Headquarters of the Continental Air Forces, Washington, D. C. At the present time he is on temporary duty at Bolling Field, Washington, D. C.

Chaplain Graebner was requested by the editor of *The Lutheran Chaplain* to give an account of his experiences. He wrote the following sketch of his activities:

"For over two years I was assigned to a headquarters in England which operated under a severe censorship 'blackout.' I know very well that you have no designs to gain secret information as a 'scoop,' but when your assignment calls for a thorough integration with an organization whose activities are largely secret, you find it even difficult to write an interesting letter to family and close friends. Everything you touch is tagged with the military equivalent of 'wet paint.' But now that I have returned and the details of former day-to-day activities have given way to the broader focus of time and distance, it is possible for me to better evaluate what to me has been a tremendous experience. And to top it all, I have just completed a brief but extremely interesting and absorbing assignment in the Air Chaplain's office in Washington.

"Early in January of this year, Chaplain Charles I. Carpenter, then Air Chaplain, became Senior Air Force Chaplain in the European Theater. He was succeeded by Chaplain Gynther Storaasli. Chaplain Storaasli is one of the older 'Regulars,' and, what is more, a Norwegian Lutheran, and I mean – rock-ribbed Lutheran. His appointment as Air Chaplain is not only honoring one of our senior Army chaplains, but it brings to this important position the benefit of his rich experience and of his deep spiritual convictions. Anyone who knows Chaplain Storaasli either by personal acquaintance or through correspondence knows him as a spiritual father and friend. His appointment bids well for the continuation of the splendid accomplishments of the Air Chaplain's office, attained under the able and aggressive leadership of Chaplain Carpenter.

RINGSIDE SEAT

"The position which I have just vacated gave me a 'ringside seat for the main bouts' of the planning and the inner workings of Army Air Forces at home and abroad and of the part which chaplains are destined to play in the supreme effort yet to be made. My assignment had to do with selecting chaplains for overseas theaters and with assignment of chaplains in the Zone of Interior. This brought me into the very inner AAF 'sanctum sanctorum.' And the thing which literally bowled me over was that military leaders, already weighed down with the tremendous responsibilities of waging a global war, could have such active interest in chaplains and in the effectiveness of their ministry. This accounts for the fact that the Air Chaplain operates, under the auspices of the Chief of Chaplains, as an integral part of Army Air Force Headquarters and enjoys the confidence and the guiding counsel of the Commanding General's Staff. I have found the same spirit prevailing during my overseas service at VIII Fighter Command Headquarters. There is nothing quite so humbling and encouraging for a chaplain as to have his Commanding General tell him of his implicit trust in the Lord and that he expects his chaplains to be loyal to their ministerial profession because of the need of true religion for fighting men. To a large degree this attitude was also apparent among Group Commanders under whom our chaplains served. Not that it was all a 'Sunday School Picnic,' but there was sufficient evidence of recognition of the chaplaincy to make the chaplain feel that he could 'let neither the Lord nor the Old Man down.'

"Because of my overseas experience as well as my recent schooling in the Air Chaplain's office, I have been honored with a new assignment with the newly activated Headquarters of Continental Air Forces. Provisionally CAF will be the operating agency of AAF Headquarters for the four Air Forces and Troop Carrier Command in the Zone of Interior. Chaplains of these commands will be under the administrative supervision of Chaplain (Col.) Charles C. Merrill, another 'old-timer' among 'Regulars,' whom I am to assist. Our temporary location is Bolling Field, Washington, D. C.

G-I DIASPORA

"And now, while CAF is gathering its personnel for eventual operations, I am having some time to reflect upon a number of things which I picked up as member of the Air Chaplain's Staff which should be of some interest to my fellow brethren in the 'G-I Diaspora.'

"1. There is a tendency among our chaplains, both at home and abroad, to feel that their job is just about finished and that they may soon return to civilian parish work. Nothing is farther from the truth as things now stand. The war with Japan is just now getting into 'high gear,' and chaplains are being shipped out in large numbers, either with units or as replacements for men who returned for one reason or another and to fill additional allotments to cover needs not provided for by T/O positions. Overseas commands have first priority on chaplains, regardless of the effect such a policy may have upon the Air Force situation at home. Not only is the outflow of chaplains going overseas exceeding the flow of returning chaplains, but the procurement program of the Chief of Chaplains for new chaplains has slowed down, and the corps as such is losing personnel through casualties, sickness, and separation from the service for one reason or other, which leaves domestic Air installations operating under a critical chaplain shortage. Consequently Air Force, with its ever-mounting mission in the Pacific, will prepare to place in the Zone of Interior every returning chaplain for some time to come.

"Though I would not presume to speak authoritatively for the Office of the Chief of Chaplains, I believe that the same general situation prevails in Army Ground and Service Forces as well. Some of us may be quite anxious to return to civilian life, and no one could be blamed for such desire. But the time is not ripe for such ideas to take root. If this information is a bit upsetting for some of us, all I can say is, remember your obligations to your calling, to your Church, and to the country you have volunteered to serve for 'the duration of the EMERGENCY and six months thereafter.'

"2. No Air Force chaplain will be obliged to serve another overseas tour until every qualified chaplain, presently assigned to Continental Air installations, has been placed on an overseas shipment. Present indications are that the number of qualified chaplains in reserve will meet future overseas needs for quite some time.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEAS SERVICE

"3. The Air Chaplain has consistently held to the policy that only those chaplains who have been promoted to the grade of captain, who have not reached their forty-fourth birthday, who are graduates of the Air Force Chaplain's Transition Conference, San Antonio, Tex., who are physically qualified for General Duty, and whose efficiency rating is not less than Very Satisfactory, may be considered fully qualified for overseas service. If you, as an AF chaplain meet these requirements and have had no previous overseas service, you may possibly find yourself sooner or later in a unit bound for some overseas theater.

WORK OF LUTHERAN CHAPLAINS IS SUPERIOR

"4. I believe that we all have noted with considerable pride the superior quality of work turned out by our Lutheran chaplains, as evidenced by the frequent references to them in our periodicals and publications. This is also borne out by the files of the Air Chaplain, as it pertains to Lutheran Air Force Chaplains. Such a record speaks well for the careful selection of our men by the Army and Navy Commission and for Synod's educational system for theological students, with its primary emphasis upon the spiritual character of the ministry. In their preaching, teaching, and counseling our chaplains excel, because (1) they present Christian doctrine and principle not as academic subjects, but as personal and enthusiastic conviction of their faith, and (2) because of their determined effort to integrate themselves and their ministry with the activities of their organizations. And, basically, that is the secret of a successful ministry, no matter where you find it. Our chaplains have learned the value of living with their men, sharing their fortunes and woes under unthinkable and unprintable circumstances, and recognize the folly of any attempt on their part to operate from a spiritual nimbus apart from the world in which their congregations move.

FUTURE MINISTRY

"Nor are we chaplains alone in our re-evaluation of the ministry in terms of this experience. Chaplains find an interested audience among enlisted and officer personnel when they speak about the future of the ministry and of the Church at the conclusion of the war. And the significant thing is that our professional military leaders, who are also thinking of the future well-being of their country, feel very strongly that the war experience of our chaplains cannot help having a vital effect upon the ministry of the future Church. They cite the close association of the chaplain with his men and his forthright exposition of spiritual truths as personal convictions as the outstanding contributory factors for their future ministry in civilian communities. All of which leads me to believe that a good number of our own chaplains will return to a civilian ministry with an enthusiastic aggressiveness and vigor that will have a vital bearing upon the future of our beloved Church.

"There may be some of my brethren in the service who do not share my optimism, perhaps because they have been less fortunate in their experience than others. But what I have stated here is not only based upon my own experience, but also on that of a goodly number of my fellow chaplains. My conclusions are therefore inescapable for me. I, for one, am truly sorry for a brother chaplain who believes that he has had more than his share of serious disappointments in his consecrated efforts to serve as a Christian pastor in the service. But perhaps the optimistic view which I cannot but represent may give him the satisfaction to know that others who have found unbounded satisfaction in their military ministry will be in a position to offer the Church the benefits of their rich experience in the future years.

"Indeed, he who desires the office of a service Chaplain, desireth a good work."

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Memory Blossoms

FROM CCC TO GERMANY

Alvin A. Katt

His reserve officers' commission dating from the month of August, 1935, Chaplain Alvin A. Katt is one of our oldest chaplains in point of service. After a considerable time of service spent with the Civilian Conservation Corps, he was ordered to active duty with the American Air Forces, Dec. 1, 1939. His article traces his Army career from Texas to the Hawaiian Islands and gives a classic account of his experiences in Europe.

"This is appleblossom time in Germany. White resplendent trees stand like radiant virgin brides surrounded by their maids in waiting attired in brilliant gay pinks. The air is filled with the chatter of birds mating about them. Near these scenes of beauty men are still fighting in the dying minutes of the great war, and where white and pink flowers glisten on the new grass, red blood also falls. There is a tiny dirty sewerage brook that runs through this apple orchard, and it, too, is stained with waste and decay. Beautiful blossoms fall into the stream to be besmirched by the murky water. Three white ducks waddle across the garden through pink flowers and yellow dandelions, unmindful of the sound of artillery fire, the rattle of machine guns, and the occasional lonely sound of a sniper's rifle. In the near-by town, buildings stand naked with tottering walls, gutted into a pile of dust and debris; perhaps the ducks are the last of the inhabitants from some combination house and barn destroyed by war. Men are passing on the road in ambulances. They have been maimed and torn by battle. The Graves Registration Service is taking back last remains to those silent places where prisoners of war dig thousands of graves as resting places for the hero dead. Each objective has its price, since the enemy foolishly would destroy others with himself.

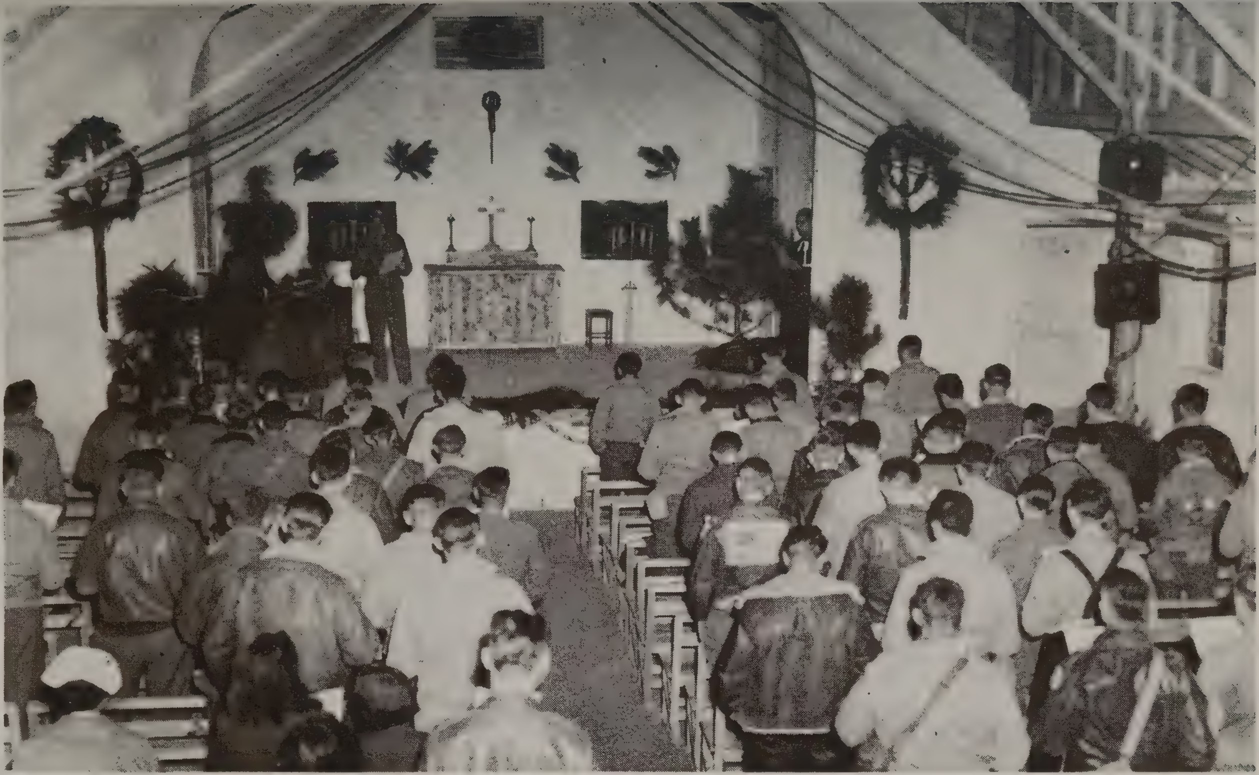
"Into this world of beauty blasted by reason of men's crimes there comes to a chaplain falling blossoms of memory. Some of them drop clean and sweet on the fragile green carpet of life, others fall soiled in the flowing gutter of men's ever-returning folly. Since a chaplain deals with immortal souls, he sees faces — thousands of faces — and circumstances come to haunt him with days that speed by like splashes of rain and disappear.

"My active duty as chaplain on continuous service began back in March, 1937, when thousands of CCC boys sought to build minds, bodies, and character in this Government agency. I must have ministered to twenty to thirty thousand men, whose hungry eager faces were receptive to the Gospel message. They are in the Army now and in the service. 'Chaplain Katt, I haven't seen you since Camp Heber Springs,' they remark, and each week I find some face in strange places in the Army. Perhaps I should mention Joe. He was a rough youngster, and a literal pain in the neck to the C. O. 'Joe is no good,' I heard people say. Joe came to church services because I did him a favor, and when I left the camp for another territory, Joe stood at my car to say good-by. 'Thanks, Chaplain,' he said, and a tear trickled down that hard face of his. 'You've done me good. I'm going to straighten out.' Last week I ran into Joe. He's with a crack tank division that saw action and was surrounded for ten days. He wears 'gold leaves' now. I liked the look in his eye when he said good-by this last time. Joe has straightened out.

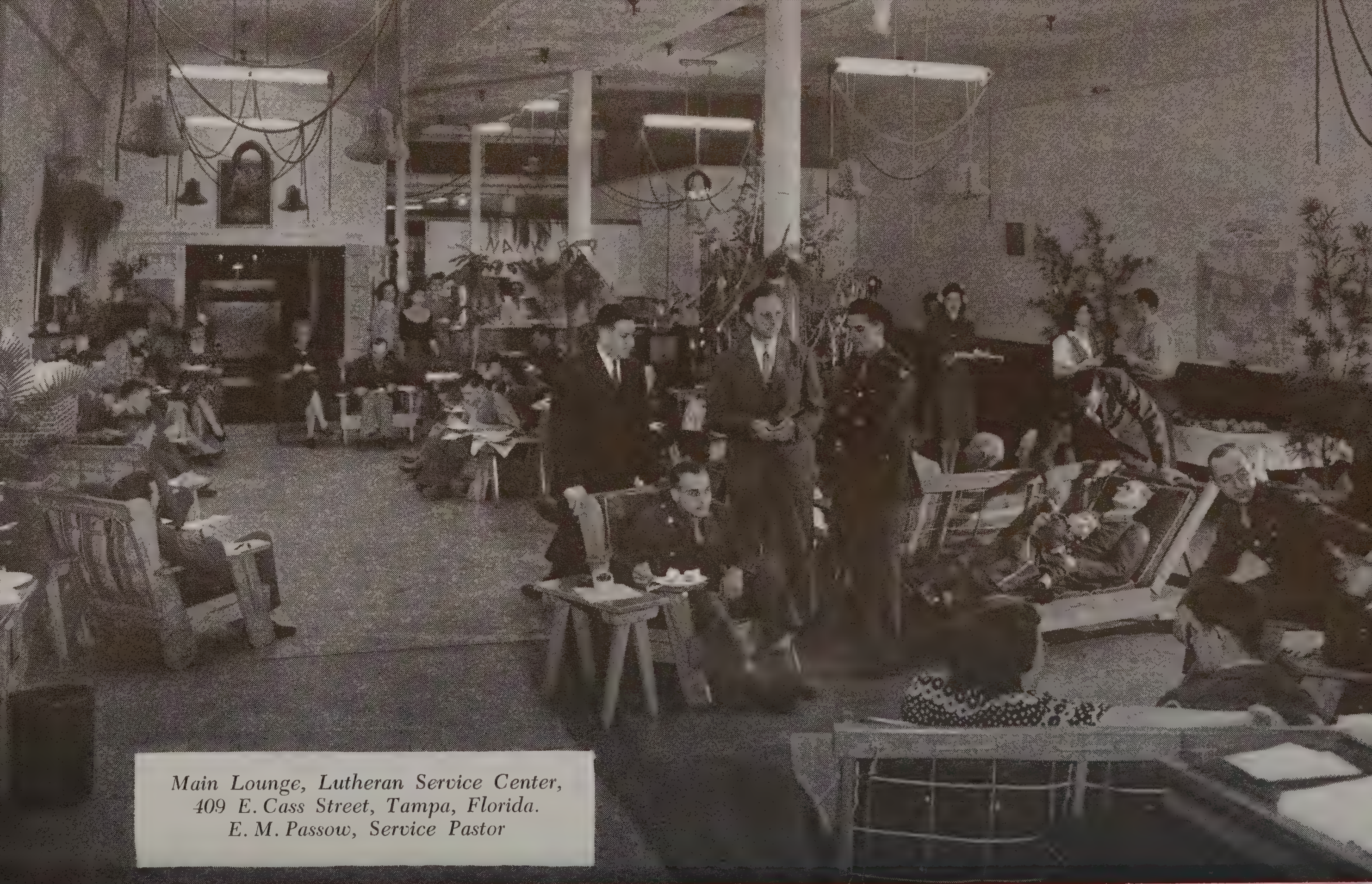
"Barksdale Field was a sweet assignment with the Air Corps. Letters of commendation still rest in my file from a school that

I initiated, but I've learned the hard way that letters don't mean anything in the course of time if there are no results. Rather would I remember a young man who hid in my chapel one evening from a scheming female. The wrong kind of a girl, who was insisting on marriage. We stopped her from ruining his life. Later he got his wings and became a pursuit pilot. I met him on a United Air Liner after coming back from Hawaii. He had been in the Pacific. We agreed that the devil's best agents are women, bad women who stoop to any vile scheme to achieve their end. A chaplain learns about women from the lives of men. Thank God, there are loyal, beautiful souls, whose loves have also sacrificed any price for their men. I'll never forget my first Air Corps pilot's wife, whose husband met the Great Pilot. Her courage and devotion had given him a taste of heaven before he went on to meet God. A chaplain learns to discern the thoughts of those who step into his office in a few brief moments, and in most cases he can tell you if the man knows and has a real woman's love in his life.

"The ocean voyage to Hawaii is a joyful memory of a sweet white steamer with a swimming pool and good companions. At my church service English royalty attended and paid me a compliment for my sermon, but this is springtime, and I see a young man with light curly hair before me. He is handsome, carefree, and reckless. A swell chap, who joins me at the rail of the ship. He's a pilot and flies B-17's. He, too, had been in my service. 'I never fly without a prayer to God to help me,' he stated simply. 'One learns something up there in the sky above the clouds. Earth fades out, and you seem closer to Him.' During our conversation an attractive girl walked by. I had met her before, and she greeted me. 'Do you know her?' he asked with a look of admiration in his blue eyes. 'Yes, she's beautiful isn't she? She's posed for magazine covers, but you'd never know it. I've never seen any girl before who was less affected by her knowledge of her beauty. A sweet girl, unspoiled, and if I were you, I'd never let her get away.' I introduced him.



China: Immediately after this service, the congregation had to disband and scramble for the trenches.
Theo. Mikolon, Chaplain



Main Lounge, Lutheran Service Center,
409 E. Cass Street, Tampa, Florida.
E. M. Passow, Service Pastor

Later I married them in the hectic days of the war and witnessed the miracle of two people perfectly mated. However, in wars not all stories have happy endings. My pilot friend crashed on a mountain in New Guinea. His golden shining hours were brief, but he had more from life than most men dream life is capable of. I am sure God heard his last prayer.

"At Wheeler Field I see a chapel and the faces of those who sought to make it beautiful in every detail. The Commanding General and his wife had excellent taste and ideas. The Engineers gave every co-operation. Out of the minds of these good people came a chapel with comfortable seats, a clean, warm, wiped-off wood finish, and a real atmosphere for worship. Even the yard was planned with care, and I hope that my Chinese janitor is still faithfully watering the Monkey Pod and coconut trees, which my Hawaiian friends donated. The Japanese sent two incendiary bullets into the chapel on the morning of the seventh, but a miracle kept them from going off, and two pilots found refuge there from the attack. Later a machine gun bristled in the doorway, but this mistake was soon remedied. A chapel can be filled with the memories of many faces, and the one at Wheeler Field can spin many interesting tales concerning those who worshiped there.

"The morning of the seventh of December promised a peaceful Sabbath with a pink and gold sunrise washing out the purple-black shadows from Diamond Head. Cocky, inquisitive mynah birds chattered in the avocado trees. Then came the sound of planes – a series of blasts – the rattle of machine gun fire strafing the quarters and airfield. Thick, heavy smoke billowed up to the sky from the hangar line, with frenzied fire under rolling dirty, black smoke. Soldiers ran wildly from their barracks. Many fell mute and still, others lay helpless, ripped by bullets. This could not be! War had not been declared! Hawaii was an impregnable fortress! Yet P-40's melted like wax, and men died.

"Time does not erase the faces covered with blood at the hospitals and the long line of dead at the morgue. Men who paid for the sneak raid by the Japanese. Two of my choir boys were there. One had down on his face and looked more like a child in death. The other a happy lad, who brought cheer to others — well, I won't explain his look. When one has seen the faces of hundreds of dead men at one time, life changes. You can never go back to certain things you felt before. A man steps across some intangible line of experience, which dims the importance of things once considered indispensable. Others may think you've changed. You can't fool yourself, for you know you have. There is nothing really important in the sight of death outside immortal souls. One can see God looking down with compassion and love on humanity despite its transgressions. How little time even at the hospital bedside to remind men that sinners can flee to Him who is the Resurrection and the Life! Faces — men who never went to chapel services — men who did. Yes, there, too, was a pilot friend. A Lutheran boy, who tried to get to his plane, but the Japanese machine gun bullets caught him as he ran. We used to go swimming together and catch the waves in body surfing at the beach.

"Then came the evacuation of women and children. Faces that I carried through the darkness and rain. Nights when it was pitch black with no lights — only a line on the road, and it was often covered with mud. Who had time to think of such things when a baby was sick or a mother ill? There were the long lines to the ships. Women who needed encouragement. Babies who needed care. Faces stained with tears, brave, courageous women and children, who hung on words of cheer. I warmed baby bottles on the motor top of my car. There were faces I lighted away from their homes with a blue flashlight making an eerie path away from their homes and security. Children who slept on schoolhouse floors, and crying babies, with clenched fists, who looked up into the blue light. Their parents strained their hearing for the sound of returning Japanese planes. This was a mad world of a thousand things to do. The dead had to be buried daily. A central filing system had to be set up for the evacuees. A radiogram service was operated for loved ones who sought some message from their sons. Hawaii was an armed camp, with barbed wire being strung over the favorite beaches; grim machine guns watched over the charging white spray, and lei sellers made camouflage.

"Out of the world was born the need for a service center. God chose a good woman to help. A woman with a sweet face, whose snow-white hair was tinged with blue. She wanted to help the service men. 'Mother McKim,' she will always be fondly called by me in memory. God called her home before I left Hawaii, but all over the world are men and women she has helped. They remain in tribute to her charity with their recollections of her kindness. The transport chaplain on board the ship I crossed on had sought her advice in becoming a chaplain. He had been helped not only financially by this good woman, but had received much good advice. Her friends are in many lands, and today in her old home men kneel before an altar to receive the body and blood of Christ to strengthen their faith. Thousands have passed through the door of the service center to enjoy the benefits of this beautiful mansion. Their Church did not forget them. Our Army and Navy Commission stood ready to serve. A sweet-faced lady in memory stands over a punch bowl and serves cookies made by her Japanese maid.

"Yes, faces like the thousands of pink flowers in the deep green grass before me come back to my mind. Men whom I knew in Hawaii. I've met them in the United States and in Europe. Last week one stopped me before the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. 'You're Chaplain Katt,' he said, 'Remember me?' Another greeted me as if he'd seen a ghost. 'I thought you were killed in the Philippines. We heard you were dead. You married me, you know. I'm going to write my wife. Man, I'm glad to see you.' Somehow I can't forget the young man who wanted the Lord's Supper in the hospital. He had a broken collarbone and was busted up when I first saw him. He's in Europe now. 'A torpedo bomb dropped in the hangar. I was thrown a block. Eighteen others were killed. My mother's prayers helped me,' he said simply. I've looked in the faces of many men these days who have walked through death's door and have come back. Men who sincerely believed their own words: 'I know I need God to fly. I never take the stick without breathing a prayer for God's help.' They may have looked reckless, dashing, and one would hesitate to classify them as good saints, but I'll bet on their chances with the Great Pilot on their last flight. Their faces are like flowers. Each different, but there is fragrance in the perfume of memory.

"The scene changes as we watch the blossoms fall in the apple orchard of life. I am en route to Europe, and there is a raging storm at sea. We have a terrific gale, which is the worst hardened sailors of the seas have seen. The ship, made for sailing between North and South America, pitches like a professional broncho at a rodeo show. I go down to the prow of the ship, where men lie packed in rows. Sick, but surprisingly full of grit, they experience with the ship the lifting high into the air and then the fall with a shattering thud as the boat slaps the water. They look for my visits; so I can't let them down although I wondered how long I could keep smiling and not join the bucket group. I broadcast a service over the loud-speaker system and reminded men of Him who stilled the Sea of Galilee.

"Quiet and peace came to the ocean as we entered the Straits of Gibraltar. We passed by a mine, within thirty feet, but God spared us. During the voyage a soldier had been taking many hours of confirmation instruction. We conducted them under every condition. Standing on deck, sitting beside lifeboats, and at night with the stars reflected in the water, we held class. His eighteen-year-old wife, a Lutheran girl, had already given him a knowledge of the Bible that astounded me. He was a big chap, and he told me his wife was little. I salute those plucky little girls who can lead big men like him around and give them a course in theology along with this. 'She'll be glad to know I'm confirmed. You'll send her the certificate, won't you? I'm mighty proud of my wife.' He was confirmed and swore allegiance to the Rock of Ages as we passed the Rock of Gibraltar. The sun was going down like a golden ball, and a blue haze covered the coasts of Spain and Africa. The wake of the ship was painted into a patch of gold by the dying rays of the sun. May his ship of matrimony always sail on vivid blue seas of happiness, with the shade of blue dependent only upon the mood of the skies and with variety in white-capped waves turned off and on like the blinkers of a light.

"Sweet France! We greeted her at Marseille, but our bivouac area was a field of mud. Infantry divisions are supposed to thrive on mud. There was a constant drizzle of cold rain and little sun to light the hazy, blue hills near by. Men had to crawl from the shelter of their pup tents into a barrage of water which penetrated cold to their bones. 'Doughfeet' – men were beginning to hate the discomfort of war – mud and cold. Tent after tent stretched across the mud flats, where rivulets swollen and tortured followed the tracks where truck wheels had spun in the soft, fertile earth. This was our initiation into the mud and cold of war.

"We were shortly committed to battle. The situation looked serious. We had seen the faces of men returning to the United States. They were demoralized men, who were sick of war and all it stood for. I passed through the hospitals and heard the stories of sufferings at the front. Trench feet, 88's, skeleton divisions, and the need for relief from many days in the lines. Before our division lay rough terrain and fighting. Men began to spend cold and bitter hours in foxholes. Trench foot and exhaustion began to appear. There was always cold – cold where we held our services in the sheds, in barrooms and in theaters and barns with no windows. The men had only one warmth, found in their desire to serve God. These men had smelled death and knew the sound of an 88. Boys became men overnight and aged years in weeks. They knew death was real – their comrades had found it. Hands have the feel of gratitude in such men when they say at the close of a service, 'Thanks, Chaplain. I enjoyed your sermon. You've helped me. There are no atheists in my front line. We lost over half of our battalion. I'm here because God helped me.' These men felt God and talked to Him. They were the forgotten men of the Infantry, who had been taken from their school and their jobs. By percentage more of them were to die than in any other branch of the service, and they needed courage for dying. 'Chaplain, I've been back at the hospital twice before. Wounded in action. Now I'm going back again, but I feel I'm cracking up. Can you help me?' Can a chaplain give nerves and courage? No, but God can – how they make it back again and again is only by the grace of God. One young man said, 'I say the 23d Psalm every night before I go to bed.' His bed many a night I knew had been a foxhole soaked with falling cold rain or snow. There is not much glamour in being a doughfoot, but America should not forget the fresh young faces of these men who grew old in days and weeks.

"Too many have paid the price of wars. Faces who passed on to the garden of eternity. Too many of them lie in France, and too many in Germany. We have done too little for them. There is too little one can do. I average seven services on Sunday and often two on weekdays. Hours are spent at the hospital, and long rides are taken to cemeteries. Each time I am forcefully reminded how many dreams, hopes, aspirations, and loves are wrapped up in the shroud of a man. Letters that I answer from loved ones tell me so. There is so little one can say when a man is dead. Yes, these appleblossoms are stained with blood – the warm, rich blood of men who paid the greatest price. Can we learn a lesson as men? Will we raise another generation to fight another war? How soon after the peace will there be more faces of refugees on the highways – will their children push the carts in the next war with the hope of saving a few meager belongings saved from what generations had saved and built?

Millions wander homeless — can the lesson of the dead help the living?

"Appleblossoms should always be white and fragrant. There should be no soiled gutters or blood to besmirch. Let souls be shiny and bright, and the music of life sweep like the mighty strains of a cathedral organ. Music should know no politics or wars. An old grandmother wanted to pump a pipe organ in a church of a village because she had two grandsons in the American Army. Strange paradox of enemies who think we are liberating them; pastors who think the people of Germany were brought from pride to humility for believing in an eternal Germany when God only is eternal; church janitors who think Hitler was a spirit out of hell and Rosenberg his evil guide. Pastors, too, felt the rigors of prison camps, and those who showed too much individualism were given small places. Perhaps liberation, at least we hope no future S. S. boys will have to be struck from the Church's rolls by the Buergermeister or young girls taught that illegitimate children are not to be borne with pride from an S. S. youth. Paradoxical Germany — we have not yet taken off the lid from her years of slavery — she has a great guilt — her destroyed cities stand as chastening monuments of God's justice.

"Evening is falling on my apple orchard — it is time to say, 'Thanks for listening.' My faces of memory will go with me, and I wish you could have known many of them more personally. They are men and women who would like to watch white ducks waddle across thick grass dotted with pink and yellow flowers. Each would agree with me that appleblossoms should fall sweet and fragrant. We should have no dirty gutters and no smell of blood, but there is still the sound of artillery in the distance and the clatter of machine-gun fire. There is work to be done in the dying moments of a great war."

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Furlough Reflections

GREETINGS FROM SOMEWHERE

Alex von Schlichten

"HEARTFELT GREETINGS from 'somewhere in the corner of our sun-drenched garden.' – The moment finds me happy, healthy, completely relaxed; in disreputable shorts and torn sport shirt, far from the rush and din of it all, in the enjoyment of 30 days' furlough (TD) at home. On May 8 I must report back to Fort Dix, preparatory to returning to my proper station in Northern Italy. It certainly feels swell to be back home, and my precious little family share in this joy. This includes Willie (aged 10) just recovering from scarlet fever – but not yet recovered from the chagrin of having it during my furlough. ('Hey, Dad, why couldn't I 'ave had it before you came?') – They join me in deepest thanks to you for all you've been to, and done for, them during my absence.

"Under separate cover you will shortly receive a complete report of my overseas ministry. A cursory glance will show that the 'returns' fluctuate. The explanation: My North African ministry in and near Oran (including MEK and Arzew) provided me with an ideal setup and yielded the richest statistical returns. The largest central service in Oran and the largest central service at the naval station in Arzew (about 25 miles from Oran) always drew large crowds, and it was my good fortune to have these services in my sole charge. Sixteen months in Africa: Services, 352; Attendance, 37,443; Lutheran Communions, 940. (This figure would be larger except for the fact that my good Brothers Spaude, Tschirley, Bartell in Algiers, and others regularly conducted Lutheran liturgical and Communion services in the centers in which I, too, was active. They did a swell job and are still hard at it!) Several months in Italy last summer were uneventful. My outfit was extremely busy assisting in preparation for the Aug. 15 invasion of Southern France, and I had to improvise my formal religious program to fit into this exacting work program. Good Brother Panning meanwhile had a weekly Communion service in the beautiful Anglo-American Church, Naples, and consequently I did not inaugurate another such service. — Shortly after the invasion the 591st broke up, and one morning Supreme Hq. called up and said I was to go back to North Africa on an important assignment. When the nature of this was later explained, I felt a little like Daniel just before he was heaved into the Lions' Den. My misgivings were largely groundless, and upon the completion of two months in Africa (that theater was rapidly drying up) I was again on the high seas, bound this time for Northern Italy, my present station. This current assignment is greatly to my liking, and I look forward to returning to it when my furlough expires.

"Early in the New Year the Northern Italy base chaplain offered me a plane trip to the Holy Land, but I countered with a request for a furlough to the U. S. A. Since I had more time overseas than most of my unit, I was singularly lucky to be chosen for the coveted privilege of a trip home. My commanding officer, of whom I am very fond, is apparently satisfied with my endeavors, for in the two ratings which he gave me on my 66-1 card both are 'superior.' This is supposed to be secret, but I peeked when the 66-1 was handed to me to take along home.

"Since my return I have preached four times and addressed numerous groups — ladies' aid societies, Sundays schools, etc., also assisted in administering Communion three times. To repeat, it is good to be back, and I thoroughly enjoy these precious days in God's own country. The prospect of going back overseas is naturally not too happy – but, then, the war should be over soon! Am brushing up on my German in anticipation of a possible tour of duty in or near Germany. The theater chaplain has hinted at this several times. However, that's still in the future!

"To confirm what you already know – our chaplains overseas seize every opportunity to inaugurate Lutheran Communion Services in strategic centers. This was true in Africa (Oran, Algiers, etc.), and it is true of Italy (Naples, Rome, Florence, etc.), and these services are generally widely advertised, and when possible and practicable, notices are inserted in the *Stars and Stripes.* Likewise our literature is widely distributed and *read.* Both in content and physical appearance our material rates a 'superior.'

"Well, the sun is getting hot, and a couple of buzzing bees threaten to dive-bomb my hapless head (besides, it's almost chow time); so I'll bring this note to a close and end on the note of deep and heartfelt gratitude which prefaces this letter. Summing up my tour of duty, all I can say is this: Like the rest of our Lutheran chaplains I tried to keep busy and put in my licks for our beloved Church and her cause. (G. I. Joe with his direct and sardonic wit might often direct his shaft at higher headquarters and paraphrase Winston Churchill in disparagement with such cracks as: 'Never in the history of human conflict have so many done so little for so few' – but I never heard him belittle the chaplains' efforts. At least he believes that we try.)"

The United States Navy

OLDEST IN POINT OF SERVICE

J. Floyd Dreith

CHAPLAIN J. FLOYD DREITH is the oldest regular Navy Chaplain from our Church group in point of service. Prior to his entry into the service he held a pastorate at San Diego, Calif. He was commissioned as chaplain of the United States Navy during the month of February, 1937. The following month he accepted a call tendered by the Army and Navy Commission.

His first assignment was in the Training Station in San Diego, Calif., where he was indoctrinated in the traditions of the Navy. His first service aboard was held on the *U. S. S. Arizona,* to which ship he was assigned in June, 1937, and he was very much gratified to have 163 present at this initial service. During December of that same year he was assigned to the *U. S. S. Pensacola,* and he reported many happy experiences because of the splendid co-operation on the part of men and officers. During 1940 he saw service with the *U. S. S. Blackhart* and then was detached for service at Tsingtao, China. He was returned to the United States during the month of November, 1940, and reported for duty at the Naval Air Station at Seattle, Wash. He continued on duty here until May, 1943, when he was assigned to the *U. S. S. Bunker Hill.* During January, 1945, Chaplain Dreith was relieved from duty with the *U. S. S. Bunker Hill* to become attached to the Naval Training School for Chaplains at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va. Today Chaplain Dreith is serving as Executive Officer to the men in school and administering the business affairs of this important station.

ONE STRAY BULLET

A vivid account of Chaplain Dreith's experience during his service in the South Pacific is given in the following lines, that were penned by him during that period of his service:

"While this is grand duty and I wouldn't change it for any other at the present, still there are times when one is in complete sympathy with one of our lads who wrote home after our first battle: 'I have saw action, and from what I seen, I have saw enough. They can fight their war.' – We are not playing drop the hanky out here. We precede every action with a prayer for all hands over the ship's speaker system; this is augmented with thousands of prayers from individuals, and the Lord has heard and answered our prayers far beyond our own expectations. In fact, if I were allowed to tell you what this ship has accomplished and the losses it has sustained in doing so, you would raise a quizzical brow and assure me that you had heard such claims before, but only from Tokyo.

"This is a most satisfying ministry, as these young men instinctively turn to the chaplain and through him to God in times of battle. American youth is not nearly as irreligious as it sometimes appears. I have had many unusual experiences. Allow me to tell you of just one:

"One day before battle I held a Communion Service and was approached after the service by a man who wanted to speak to me privately. I made an appointment for that evening. This man was a 1st class petty officer and an excellent man. He was married and was expecting an addition the following month. He had been on numerous combat hops as a rear seat man, radioman, and gunner, and was scheduled to fly the next day.

"I'll give you some of the ensuing conversation as nearly as I can remember it:

" 'Chaplain,' he said, 'I'm scared to go up tomorrow; I'm actually sick to my stomach.'

" 'Weren't you scared before?'

" 'Certainly, but not like this. I'm really sick with dread thinking about tomorrow's hop.'

" 'Well, I'll speak to your skipper and have you relieved.'

" 'No, Chaplain, that is the last thing I want you to do. I'm not yellow. I asked for this duty. I've got to fly tomorrow to prove to myself that I'm not yellow. If I don't fly tomorrow, I'll never fly again, and I'll never be able to hold my head up again. I want you to help me overcome this feeling.'

" 'But will you be able to do your job if you go up feeling as you do?'

" 'I certainly will; that I promise, no matter what happens.'

"Actually he was more afraid of being afraid than he was of flying. He was a Christian lad, made a confession of his sins and his faith. I comforted him as best as I could, assuring him of God's promises, quoting especially Rom. 8:28 and 31. When he left me, he was much calmer, but he still retained a strange premonition that all would not be well.

"I buried him at sea the following afternoon. One stray bullet. The only man lost on that particular strike. God still moves in mysterious ways, and His ways are past finding out.

DIVINE PROTECTION

"Only recently I had occasion to give thanks to our Lord for His marvelous protection. Our aviators had an experience for which they openly gave credit to the Lord. As one man put it: 'The Lord was in the cockpit of every one of those planes.' One of my close friends, the torpedo skipper, holder of the Air Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross, and recommended for the Navy Cross, a man who has eagerly sought to learn more of his Savior and who firmly believes in Him, had this remarkable experience. He led his boys against the Japs, took off late in the afternoon, knowing it would be dark when he got back, chased them beyond the operating range of his plane, knowing he wouldn't have enough gas to get back, flew through terrific antiaircraft fire to send home a torpedo on a carrier which was sunk (others of his boys also hit it), and then started back unharmed. But let him tell the story: 'Floyd, I wasn't the least bit concerned. I followed the advice you gave in your sermon, did the best I could, took the whole matter to the Lord in prayer, and then let Him do the worrying. When I got away from the target unharmed, I knew that the Lord wouldn't take me through all that ack ack to let me get lost or drown in the ocean. When we had to bail out 'cause the gas was gone, I still wasn't worried. I just said, "Ken, you're in the Lord's hands now, and He'll take better care of you than you could take care of yourself. I bailed out after my men had done likewise, hit the drink, and inflated my little lifeboat. When daylight came, I read my New Testament and felt pretty good about everything. I took care to conserve my fresh water supply; then that same morning a rain squall hit me, and I had more fresh water than I could use; so I immediately lost that concern. As you know, I was picked up later on, and here I am. To me the whole experience was miraculous from beginning to end. I don't care what anyone says, the Lord still cares for His own.' I spent two anxious days of earnest prayer for that man and others in like predicament, and the Lord heard and answered our prayers beyond our fondest expectations.

A SERVICE AT SEA

"As the men on the fighting warships at sea earnestly go about their country's business of seeking out and destroying the enemy, day merges into day with a regularity and similarity which deadens all awareness as to the day of the week or month. On this particular morning, as the lovely strains of church call emerge from the speaker system, followed by the practical announcement: 'Divine services are now being held on the foc'sle, the smoking lamp is out, keep silence about the decks,' all men are reminded that this is a special day.

"It is the Lord's Day, and it is observed as such more conscientiously and regularly — even in the midst of a battle, although this may dictate very unusual hours — than has been customary in the peaceful environment of home and family. There may even be times when, because of the persistence of the enemy's effort to arrange for us a rendezvous with the deep, all that follows may occur on some other than the traditional first day of the week.

STREAMING TOWARDS THE FOC'SLE

"The time for this service varies from week to week, depending upon the scheduled operations. On this Sunday, church call is sounded at 0930, for one strike group has just been launched, and the returning group, which left in the darkness of pre-dawn, has just landed safely aboard. There will be an interval during which the roar of airplane motors will not shatter the calm of the Pacific in the vicinity of the ship.

'The boatswain's announcement has not ceased echoing through the compartments when the men come from all parts of the ship, streaming towards the foc'sle, from the firerooms, from the holds and storerooms, from the workshops and offices, from ready rooms and flight deck, from gun batteries and lookout stations. Those that can be spared without impairing the fighting efficiency of the ship quietly leave their posts and go to worship the Lord.

WARLIKE BACKGROUND

"Some, who because of a watch during the night had the morning off, arrive early.

"As they sit quietly, gazing at the altar and the cross — the guns and shells (which form a warlike and, at first glance, incongruous background to His house), gradually fade from view, and the worshipers again see the church of their childhood and comprehend more fully than ever before the serenity, the peace, and stability which that represented in their lives.

"Some page through the hymnal, reading the prayers, the Scripture lessons, and the old familiar hymns which have assumed a new importance in their lives. Some sit quietly and think — and remember — and pray.

SWEAT-STAINED AND SUN-FADED

"They come in khakis and grays, in flight gear and working uniform, in dungarees and in white, many exhibiting the cleanliness which is typical of the American bluejacket, others covered with the grime of the task they have just left; and still others with the honest sweat induced by the long and dangerous combat mission from which they have just returned.

"Thus they come to meet their God, garbed, just as they work, in varied colored sweaters, denoting the crew to which they belong, red, yellow, brown, blue, but all sweat-stained and sun-faded. No time is wasted in 'getting ready' for church, as all available time must be devoted to worshiping Him in whose name we live — and some die.

SOME FIND SEATS

"There is no concerted rush for the seats which will accommodate but a few of the worshipers, for their minds are not occupied with physical comforts, but with Him who first loved them. Some find seats, a few perch themselves precariously and uncomfortably upon wildcats, capstans, walkaways, anchor chains, and any other gear to be found on the foc'sle of a man-of-war, and the great majority must remain standing upon a steel deck for the entire service. They, officers and men alike, stood up last Sunday and the Sunday before, knew in advance that they would have to stand today, and will gladly stand up every Sunday if they can but be assured of His love and compassion for them.

Members of the U. S. Coast Guard help themselves to tracts after services at the U. S. Naval Armed Guard Center, Brooklyn, N. Y. Herbert C. Albrecht, Chaplain

Service at the Naval Hospital, Chelsea, Massachusetts. Chaplain Milton G. Kuolt, Officiant

BEAT OF THE WAVES

"They share their hymnals one with another, or four or five peer over each other's shoulders, and all join in the singing of the hymns familiar to all Christendom. They sing, not lustily, but earnestly and devoutly. While from a musical viewpoint their singing leaves something to be desired, it is the finest congregational singing one can hear, for it originates in hearts tuned by God. In the background the beat of the waves against the hull and the creak of the flight deck overhead mark the tempo of a nation at war.

HELLCATS GO DRONING BY

"As the Word of Life is brought to them by the chaplain in plain and unvarnished language, protective Hellcats go droning by, ever on the alert for an attack by the enemy. Occasionally, as one comes near the ship and drowns out the words of the preacher, two or three heads are turned — in annoyance, not interest.

"On either side steams the world's mightiest fleet, composed of those dreadnoughts of the deep, the mighty battleships, flanking the ever potent flattops, surrounded in turn by the sleek cruisers and the terriers of the sea — the destroyers. America's superlative Navy extends to the far horizon in every direction, and the winged might of that fleet drones alertly overhead.

"But in the very midst of 'the greatest show on earth,' men have eyes only for the humble Carpenter of Nazareth, their Savior from sin, and ears only for the words of life which issued from His hallowed lips.

"All too soon the chaplain, with upraised arms, pronounces the old familiar blessing, 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee . . . and give thee peace.'

"Quietly, reluctantly, the men return to their appointed tasks, strengthened, renewed, and in the turmoil of war their hearts are filled with that peace which passeth all human understanding."

FIRST PURPLE HEART CHAPLAIN

Raymond Charles Hohenstein

Chaplain ray hohenstein was born in St. Paul, Minn., on Aug. 13, 1907, attended Concordia College at St. Paul and Fort Wayne, and was graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary in June, 1930. He was ordained at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minn., during the month of August of this same year, by the Rev. Paul Lindemann. His first parish was the Archer Avenue Lutheran Mission in Chicago, Ill., and, following this, he accepted a call to Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church at Parkridge, Ill. After considerable delay his appointment as chaplain to the United States Navy was effected during the month of January, 1940. He executed his oath of acceptance on Jan. 20 of this same year, preached his farewell sermon on the 21st day of January, and left for Washington, D. C., the following day. His first six weeks were spent in Washington and Quantico. His first assignment on board was with the *U. S. S. Melville.* Then came the assignment with the *U. S. S. Boise,* which was stationed at Pearl Harbor during 1940. The following year he was assigned to the *U. S. S. California* and was on duty with this ship during the fateful days of Pearl Harbor, where he was among the first battle casualties resulting from the unheralded attack of the Japanese. He bears the distinction of being the first chaplain of any church group to wear the Purple Heart. After his hospitalization at Pearl Harbor he was transferred to the Continental United States and served at Great Lakes Training Station, Ill. During the month of June, 1943, he was transferred to the United States Naval Station at Key West, Fla., where he spent delightful days in ideal climatic conditions, supervising the spiritual work at this important station. Since then he was assigned to the newly commissioned *U. S. S. Wisconsin,* which has established quite a record in the

South Pacific. As a result Chaplain Hohenstein has seen much action, though we must glean his experiences from newspaper accounts. The following interesting article appeared in the Milwaukee *Journal* on the 24th of April, 1945, concerning the *U. S. S. Wisconsin:*

"The mighty *U. S. S. Wisconsin,* unexcelled by anything afloat, has been in action in the Pacific for months, it was learned Tuesday.

"Blows at Tokyo, Hong Kong, Iwo Jima, and other strong Japanese points are listed in the log of the 'Big W,' the crew's pet name for the mighty 45,000-ton battleship launched Dec. 7, 1943. The current issue of the *Badger,* official ship publication, lists its exploits.

"The *Badger* indicates that the first major smash at Japan power came Oct. 11, 1944, when 'strikes were made on Formosa that proved very effective.' This was several days before the Navy released stories by a *Journal* staff member on the ship's shakedown cruise in the Atlantic, after which she became part of the fleet.

"The next major undertaking was on Dec. 14, when she was 'off the coast of Luzon, aiding in covering the air strikes which neutralized Jap air power on that island while Gen. Mac Arthur's troops invaded Mindoro.'

CAUGHT IN TYPHOON

" 'It was at the conclusion of this operation that the ship was plunged into the midst of a roaring typhoon, which made life very uncomfortable for a couple of days,' says the *Badger.* According to press accounts, the typhoon was early in January. A number of American destroyers were sunk in the typhoon.

" 'A few weeks later the "Big W" was again off Formosa and Luzon, this time helping out in the invasion of Luzon itself,' the account continues. 'And the fleet piled up an impressive record of enemy aircraft and vessels destroyed,' it adds.

"The Luzon landings were started Jan. 10. Little time was wasted after covering that operation, because the account shows that 'in a swift move the ships steamed into Japan's own back yard – the South China Sea. Here assistance was offered during the air strikes on Camranh Bay (Jan. 12), Hong Kong, and other ports, ranging the length of the coast of South China. Alerted at all times, the antiaircraft batteries had little to do except stand monotonous, lengthy watches, since the Japs offered no air opposition. Their job was the most strenuous and tedious of the entire operation.'

HELPED TOKYO RAID

" 'What must have been the highlight of operations for officers and crew of the heavyweight of the seas came Feb. 16, when the "Big W" was part of the Navy force which made history in the smashing raids on Tokyo, hitting Jap air power and land bases,' the *Badger* relates. 'Later the *Wisconsin* provided sea support for the marine forces which succeeded in capturing Iwo Jima after a bloody struggle. Security regulations prevent detailed description of this operation.'

"The paper points out that 'censorship regulations now permit publication of the fact that the *Wisconsin* has participated in many dramatic fleet operations in recent months' and concludes, tauntingly, 'that belle of the western Pacific, Tokyo Rose (radio broadcaster), predicted that the fleet would never leave the South China Sea, but it did. We don't know what alibi she is giving her sponsor now.' "

MY HUSBAND IS A NAVY CHAPLAIN

Irma Beck Albrecht

"JOIN THE NAVY AND SEE THE WORLD" may be a true, well-worn saying, but it has certainly proved true for me since my husband joined the Navy Chaplain Corps. In seventeen months of Navy life I have crossed the continent two and one-half times, covered 15,000 miles, and gone through 26 States. It has been one of the most pleasant and gratifying experiences of my life. When he went into the Navy, I resolved that I would always go along with my husband as far as this is possible in wartime.

Our Navy life resolves itself into three phases, Chaplain School at Norfolk, Va.; a hitch of sea duty on the West Coast; and now shore duty in that almost foreign territory, Brooklyn.

EAST COAST

Norfolk in the fall was very pleasant. There were just a few chaplains' wives who had come there. I got my real initiation into the Navy traditions at the Red Cross in the N. O. B., where I became well acquainted with other Navy wives and Mrs. Neyman, whose husband was the head of the school. We worked for the Navy Hospital three full days a week.

Since most of the chaplains' wives weren't there, what the men missed most was home cooking, even though Navy food is excellent. So, we had many of them over for dinner. I would always say, "You bring the meat, I'll furnish the rest." This was in pre-ration days, and meat was difficult to find.

WEST COAST

When school was almost over, came the suspense of waiting for orders. Ours were to Seattle to catch a ship. There followed a wonderful two weeks of driving across the country, the southern way, to avoid the early snows. Driving across the desert was eerie. Army maneuvers were in progress; so there were no rooms to be had. We never knew when a convoy of trucks or jeeps would loom before us without lights. Then came the beautiful drive up the Pacific Coast to Seattle. The first couple we met there were the Dreiths. Chaplain J. Floyd Dreith is one of our own Lutheran Navy chaplains. Much to our surprise, Mrs. Dreith and I found that we had played basketball on opposing teams back in St. Louis. Because of their several years' experience in the Navy, the Dreiths could give us much valuable advice.

HUSBAND AT SEA

Having one's husband absent within the country is one matter; having him out at sea is something entirely different. For the next ten months my life was one of many weary weeks of waiting. But as soon as the ship made port, they were forgotten.

When the ship was in port, I found that a chaplain's duties are perhaps more numerous ashore than they are at sea. I soon discovered that if I wanted to see my husband at all, I'd have to follow him around all day from one duty to the next. At that I was more fortunate than the other wives whose husbands were assigned to the ship. My husband came ashore every day, while theirs had to stand watch and could come ashore only every other day.

CHAPLAIN'S MANY DUTIES

My husband's duties ashore consisted of trying to settle some of the sailors' personal problems, getting books from the Victory Book Campaign, borrowing volumes from a lending library to take aboard, buying religious materials for himself and many things for chaplains at outlying bases, getting recreational material, hobby work, and sporting gear for the ship, and arranging for entertainment. As the ship plied mostly in the waters where the sun never shone, it seemed feasible to try to arrange for picnics when the ship was in port. The enlisted men loved these and enjoyed a real sailor's holiday – swimming, canoeing, and boating.

When the ship was in, the wives were allowed to go aboard for dinner. This was a real adventure. The food was the best in the world.

"THE SMOKING LAMP IS OUT"

On Sundays I would go aboard for church services. The biggest thrill I had was to go aboard on a Sunday morning and see the church flag flying above the American flag. The P. A. system would announce: "Divine services are now being held. All unnecessary noise must cease! The smoking lamp is out!" As a ship has no chapel, church must be "rigged" every Sunday, on the deck, in the recreational room, or in any suitable place. The piano is often roped to the bulkhead. I didn't really see the significance of this until my husband told me that one Sunday the ship rolled so much that he had to hold the lectern upright during the whole service.

LETTERS

While the ship was at sea, the other wives and I would get together to compare our infrequent letters (they were all censored) and to speculate on all the possibilities of how long the trip might be, or where the ship might be, or when it would come back. We never knew definitely, but it formed the topic for endless hours of conversation. In other words, we had a common ground for friendship.

I've often been asked if I didn't worry about my husband's safety while he was at sea. Living near the ocean helped me overcome my fear of the water. I learned early that one must simply trust in God for a loved one's safety. However, I did get very lonely, as must all wives whose husbands have gone to war.

This fall, while the ship was temporarily in San Francisco, my husband received a change in orders. By the time I got down there, he had orders to report to New York; so we had to leave at once. Before we left, however, we got to eat aboard my brother's ship, which had docked. We had to return to Seattle to pack and then trek across the country back to the East Coast.

EAST COAST AGAIN

After a month on Long Island with the Atlantic Ocean for a front yard, we moved to Brooklyn, where my husband is now stationed at the U. S. Naval Armed Guard Center.

At the Armed Guard Center, church services are held on the main deck of what was formerly an armory, and they are most impressive because of the sincere interest and solemn aura of worship which surround them. The sailors who attend are often getting ready for or have just returned from dangerous duty. The Christmas services were made more beautiful by lovely settings, a home-talent quartet, a near-by Lutheran choir, and an electric organ, which was brought in for the holidays.

A chaplain's duties at this base are much different from duty on a ship. There are many more boys and consequently a greater variety of problems which need solving.

WEDDINGS

One of the first interesting experiences at our new station occurred on a trip to Orange, N. J. My husband performed the ceremony for an all-Navy wedding there. An ensign of the WAVES was married to a lieutenant junior grade. They wanted to be married by a naval chaplain. The young lieutenant had one day wandered in to see my husband about another matter. During the course of the conversation the young man discovered that my husband was a member of the Church of the Lutheran Hour. He made up his mind then and there that no other naval chaplain would do. He had often listened to the Lutheran Hour and said he had been looking for a chaplain who believed as he did.

Navy life is certainly not like civilian life during war times. You must accustom yourself to the uprooting of a household at a moment's notice. You often go to places where you know no one and have no place to live, but somehow things always turn out well. You learn to live every day to its fullest and worry very little about the future.

Friendships are short-lived, of necessity, but just as sincere and fervent as can be. Many new friends are made, and one's acquaintanceship and experience broaden.

"LUTHERAN SERVICE CENTERS ARE WONDERFUL"

Both in San Francisco and New York City the Lutheran Service Centers helped us find a place to stay. The Army and Navy Commission's Centers are doing a wonderful job in many ways for service men and women.

As for me, I can think of no greater privilege than being a Navy chaplain's wife. It is a great comfort to know that wherever he may be, my husband is serving not only his country, but God at the same time.

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In Memoriam

CHAPLAIN PAUL EDWARD LOEBER

1905–1943

CHAPLAIN PAUL EDWARD LOEBER (died June 22, 1943), son of Rev. and Mrs. Paul Loeber, Roxbury, Mass., was born April 9, 1905, at Providence, R. I. He prepared himself for the holy ministry by attending Concordia College, Bronxville, N. Y., and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., graduating from Concordia Seminary in 1929. On Oct. 6, 1929, Pastor Loeber was ordained and installed as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Delray Beach, Fla. In July, 1933, he accepted a call to Zion Lutheran Church, North Plymouth, Mass., which congregation he served until he was ordered to active duty with the Army of the United States on Nov. 28, 1942. After attending Chaplain School at Harvard University, Chaplain Loeber was assigned to Fort Warren, Wyo., where later on he became ill and was confined to the hospital. He was transferred to a chaplains' pool, unassigned, that he might recuperate, and in the month of March was sent to Madison, Wis., for hospitalization. From there he was transferred to the Schick General Hospital at Clinton, Iowa, where he died on Tuesday, June 22.

Funeral services were held in Trinity Lutheran Church, Oshkosh, Wis., Sunday, June 27.

Chaplain Loeber, the first chaplain of our Church to be called to his heavenly home during this present conflict, was a man who realized the magnitude of his task and gave himself to his ministry with singleness of heart and unswerving loyalty. From the very outset this faithful pastor indicated that he had adjusted himself to the military life and made use of every opportunity to preach the saving Gospel and minister to his men in a pastoral way. Letters of soldiers whom he served testify to the sound Biblical preaching and an all-consuming desire on the part of their chaplain to minister to their spiritual needs. Undoubtedly his devotion to duty and his burning love for his work were factors that contributed to his confinement in the hospital – removing him from active duty to which he was never to return.

Chaplain L. S. Imm, who was at Schick General Hospital with Chaplain Loeber, writes: "The chaplain underwent an operation early Tuesday morning and passed away about two o'clock in the afternoon. I saw him the last time about ten o'clock Monday night. He was cheerful, unworried, and confident of the outcome of the operation. I am very much convinced that he passed away in the faith and is now enjoying the bliss of heaven."

Our departed comrade's work is now ended, and heaven alone will reveal the splendid record of his accomplishments. We salute him in recognition of his singular performance of task and the splendid record which he established in the short period during which he was able to serve the church at large and the men in the military.

We also pray that the heavenly Father, who has removed Chaplain Loeber from a sphere of activity in the prime of his manhood, will be near the bereaved and give them the abiding confidence that He does all things well.

CHAPLAIN HENRY C. HEMMETER

1907–1943

Chaplain henry c. hemmeter, chaplain in the Army of the United States since March, 1941, fell asleep in his Savior on Dec. 9, 1943, at Oro Bay, New Guinea. He succumbed to an attack of scrub typhus, contracted while serving his troops in the South Pacific. Burial services in New Guinea were conducted by Chaplain Albert Heber of our Synod. On Dec. 21 a memorial service was held at Mount Olive Evangelical Lutheran Church, Chicago, Ill.

The departure of Chaplain Hemmeter leaves us with a sense of deep loss. The Lord took him while he was in the midst of a great and important work. Chaplain Hemmeter, especially during the past twelve months in the South Pacific, was in a position to preach the message of salvation to many who longed for it with a deep and powerful longing, to many who were called upon to face the enemy in mortal combat. As a good servant of Jesus Christ, the chaplain's one desire was to preach the Gospel to the men entrusted to his care. In this he spent himself completely. Letters from soldiers whom he served testify how urgently his ministrations were needed and how deeply they were appreciated.

Among those whom the chaplain served were also many members of our Church. On one occasion, referring to the Lutherans in his unit, he wrote: "It is almost like conducting a service back home when they get together."

All who knew Chaplain Hemmeter and the characteristic courage and cheerfulness with which he served his God are deeply grieved by his departure, but at the same time are comforted in the knowledge that the heavenly Father does all things well. He had other plans for our brother in Christ. The chaplain's work on earth was finished. Now the Lord has given him a new life in heaven.

We know also that the chaplain departed this world as he would have desired – humbly serving his Lord. In his last letter before he left the States, Chaplain Hemmeter wrote: "For the sake of the many fine young men who march out of here tonight I am glad that I can be with them as the representative of Him who is watching over us all." Then, like the soldiers to whom he brought the Word and the Sacrament before they closed their eyes in death, he, too, was called home in the midst of faithful and loyal service to his God and country. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

Chaplain Henry C. Hemmeter was born Nov. 12, 1907, in Pittsburgh, Pa., the son of the Rev. Henry Bernard Hemmeter, D. D., and his wife Ann, nee Heitmuller. After attending East High School, Rochester, N. Y., he prepared for the holy ministry at Concordia College, Bronxville, N. Y.; Concordia College, Conover, N. C.; and the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. Later he took postgraduate work at the University of Nebraska.

On June 21, 1931, he was ordained to the holy ministry at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Chicago, and installed as missionary pastor at Eastern Heights, St. Paul, Minn., where he served until 1935.

He was united in holy wedlock with Anne Schneider of Chicago on June 25, 1933. Their marriage was blessed with two children, Henry Paul and Cathryn Louise.

From 1935 to 1938 he served at the Lutheran Chapel of St. John in Philadelphia, Pa., and from 1938 to 1942 as pastor of Redeemer Church, Lincoln, Nebr.

In June, 1941, Chaplain Hemmeter reported for active duty with the Army of the United States, serving for a year at Camp Roberts, Calif., where he was promoted to captain. He was then appointed Post Chaplain at Fort William Henry Harrison, Mont. In December, 1942, he sailed for overseas.

The chaplain is mourned by his sorrowing widow, two children, both parents, five sisters, and one brother. We pray that our heavenly Father will be near the bereaved and grant them the abiding assurance of a blessed reunion in heaven.

"I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety. . . . As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake, with Thy likeness."

CHAPLAIN MARKUS EWALD LOHRMANN

1910–1944

CHAPLAIN MARKUS E. LOHRMANN lost his life in the Southwest Pacific on March 6, 1944.

According to messages received from the War Department, death was the result of a heart attack incurred while the chaplain was at sea, off Good-enough Island. He received a Christian burial with full military honors on March 7. Both units served by the chaplain were present at the service, and an honor guard of ten men, among them seven Synodical Conference Lutherans, paid their final respects: Pfc. Anton E. Berg, McIntosh, Minn.; Sgt. Alfred Bohn, Tyler, N. Dak.; Pfc. Carl Ewertz, Milwaukee, Wis.; Pfc. Vernon Hain, Tolley, N. Dak.; Sgt. Leo Meinelschmidt, New York, N. Y.; Pfc. Elmer Plagge, New Ulm, Minn.; Sgt. Raymond Rhode, Winsted, Minn.

On Sunday, April 23, memorial services where held at Saint John's Lutheran Church, Effingham, Ill. The Rev. Otto E. Sohn of Flint, Mich., member of Synod's Army and Navy Commission, delivered the memorial address. Messages were read from the President of Synod, Dr. J. W. Behnken; the president of the Central Illinois District, the Rev. A. C. Bernthal; the Chief of Army Chaplains, William R. Arnold; the chaplain's commanding officer, Col. Charles Jones; and men in the armed forces whom Chaplain Lohrmann had served. The Rev. H. E. Zimmermann served as liturgist.

Pastor Lohrmann was among the first clergymen of our Church to enter the chaplaincy. He was ordered to active duty on April 1, 1940, and had been stationed since then at Fort Benning, Ga.; Alexandria, La.; Fort Meade, S. Dak., where he served as Post Chaplain for almost two years; the Hawaiian Islands; Australia; and other localities in the Southwest Pacific.

Our departed brother devoted himself to his work with great enthusiasm and singleness of heart. His one desire was to tell men of the Savior Jesus Christ, who shed His blood to redeem the world. Letters from those with whom he served testify to his unflagging efforts in preaching the Gospel wherever and whenever there was opportunity. Truly, he spent himself entirely in the service of his Master; and we, who are deeply grieved by his departure, at the same time are comforted with the thought that he may continue to serve His Lord in the realms above.

Chaplain Markus Ewald Lohrmann was born on Dec. 26, 1910, near Covington, Ill., the son of Rev. Justus C. Lohrmann and his wife Clara, nee Vogel. He prepared for the holy ministry at St. Paul's College, Concordia, Mo., and at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, graduating in 1935. In 1936 he was ordained to the holy ministry and installed as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, near Altamont, Ill., where he served until 1940.

He was united in holy marriage with Gertrude Wente of Effingham, Ill., on May 29, 1940. Their marriage was blessed with a daughter, Marcia Mathilda, born Aug. 6, 1942.

The chaplain is mourned by his beloved widow and daughter, his parents, three sisters, and six brothers. May the heavenly Father be near the bereaved and grant them the abiding assurance of a blessed reunion in heaven.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

CHAPLAIN MEL E. WERTMAN

1913–1945

Chaplain mel e. wertman was killed in an aircraft accident at Casablanca, French Morocco, on Feb. 23, 1945, three weeks after he had left the United States for an overseas assignment. He is the fourth chaplain of our Synod to lose his life while serving God and his country in the armed forces.

Chaplain Wertman's departure is a great loss both to the Church and to the Corps. He was beloved by all who knew him, a man of God who was willing at all times to be "all things to all men."

His assistant at Sheppard Field, Pfc. Gaylord A. St. John, wrote to the Commission: "All the men here, officers and enlisted men both, admired and respected him tremendously. Often the men would come to the office or stop me on the street or in the mess hall to tell me what a magnificent person he was. I knew!"

Those who knew Pastor Wertman intimately, both in the armed forces and in civilian life, will remember his cheerfulness, his good humor, and, above all, his great courage – his willingness to undergo the uttermost for the sake of his Lord and Savior. Truly it may be said of him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"

Mel E. Wertman was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., on May 12, 1913. He was graduated from Garrick High School in Pittsburgh and received his ministerial training at Concordia College, Bronxville, N. Y., and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. In February, 1939, he was ordained pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Deer Lodge, Mont. Previous to that he had served as vicar in

U. S. Troops and Nurses Who Attended Services at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Brisbane, Australia.
Theo. A. Reimers, Service Pastor

Mother's Day Army and Navy Service at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, San Francisco, G. E. Kirchner and F. A. Jacobsen, Pastors. One Hundred Service Men and Women Participated in the Processional

St. Andrew's Church, Pittsburgh, and at Hope Lutheran Church, High Ridge, Mo.

On Oct. 25, 1942, Chaplain Wertman was ordered to active duty with the Army of the United States, first to the Chaplain School at Harvard and then to Sheppard Field, Tex., where he was stationed until February of this year, when he was ordered to overseas duty.

He is mourned by his wife, two daughters – Marsha, 3, and Janis, 18 months – his mother, two brothers, and one sister.

May our heavenly Father be near the bereaved and grant them the abiding assurance of a blessed reunion in heaven.

Lutheran Chaplains

ON ACTIVE DUTY AS OF MAY 7, 1945

ARMY

Ahl, Kenneth L.
Ahlemeyer, Edward H.

Bachert, William C.
Bandt, Wm. H. F.
Bartell, Edward N.
Bauer, Hermann M.
Baumgaertner, Martin W.
Becker, Wilbur H.
Behnke, Albert A.
Behnken, J. W., Jr.
Behrens, Henry J.
Belsheim, Harold G.
Berger, Harold E.
Berning, Norman F.
Bertram, Arnold Herman
Biel, Kurt W.
Bornhoeft, Theodore P.
Bostelmann, Albert T.
Brammer, Martin G.
Brehm, John J. C.
Breihan, Armin H.
Brohm, Edgar H.
Brohm, Theo. Lorenz, Jr.
Buck, Raymond
Buege, William A.
Buerger, Edgar J.
Busse, Otto C.
Bussman, Herbert L.

Callies, Elmer W. G.
Claus, Alfred Byron
Coiner, Harry G.
Cook, Martin L.
Craft, Victor H.

Dahlke, Victor W.
Daib, Walter C.
Dallmann, Bertram
Daniels, John F.
Danner, Bernard L.
Deffner, Edward G.
Doege, Arthur J.
Dorre, Walter E.
Du Brau, Richard T.
Dvorovy, John *

* Member of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church

Eggers, Carl R.
Egloff, Lee G.
Elser, John G.

Fiehler, Daniel G.
Finke, Frederick K.
Fleischer, Edward J.
Frank, Victor C.
Frankenstein, Kenneth F.
Frerking, Horace Robert
Fricke, Harry C.
Fricke, Robert W.

Gabbert, Paul W.
Gaertner, John F.
Gerecke, Henry F.
Gerike, Gerhardt J. C.
Gerken, Walter C.
Golisch, Clarence F.
Graebner, Eugene J.
Graebner, Martin L.
Graef, Frederick A.
Grapatin, John W.
Griessel, Albert C.
Grimm, Herman J. C.
Grothe, A. F.
Grunow, William P.
Gumz, Frederick A.

Hagemann, Harold D.
Halboth, Victor F.
Hannusch, William K.
Hansen, Paul G.
Harre, Elmer C.
Hartman, Ervin H.
Hartmann, Walter H.
Heckmann, Carl A.
Hedemann, Lester E.
Heidemann, Leonard W.
Heimsoth, Arnold Edwin
Heitmann, Paul H.
Hemer, Albert G.
Henning, Vernon O.
Hessler, Edward A.
Heuer, Ernest E.
Heuer, Herman H.
Hinck, Waldemar E.
Hoffmann, Ben G.
Holm, B. G. E.
Huchthausen, Walter A.
Hussmann, Otto B.

Jank, Max T.
Jank, Robert M.
Janke, Wilfred H.
Jehn, Ernst J. C.

Kaiser, John Charles
Kalthoff, Reinhold H.
Kanning, William D.
Karpinsky, Gustav A.
Kasper, Raymond L.
Katt, Alvin A.
Kautz, George William
Kautz, William K.
Klann, Herman R.
Klausler, Alfred P.
Klaustermeyer, William H.
Klein, Herman
Kleinhans, Walter O.
Klewin, Robert E.
Kluge, Arnold F.
Koepke, Theodore V.
Kohn, Otto E.
Kohn, William H.
Kretzschmar, Martin H.
Krieger, W. Harry
Kroencke, Edward J.
Krueger, Ralph E.
Krug, Werner P.
Kuehnert, E. C.

Lammert, Fred
Langhans, Reuben William
Larson, Leland Roland
Lemke, Roland K.

Leverenz, Edwin W.
Leverenz, Gerhard M.
Lindemann, Albert H.
List, Hugo Karl
Lohrke, Waldemar C.
Luecke, Gerhard L. G.
Luedke, Henry W. C.

Maleske, Harold J.
Markgraf, O. H.
Marohn, Edwin W.
Marwede, Wm. H. W.
Mehl, Lambert J.
Mehringer, Wm. G.
Mennen, George E.
Mennen, Roswell E.
Miessler, Wm. R.
Mikolon, Theodore W.
Miller, Fred M.
Moehring, John W.
Mueller, Kurt H.
Munderloh, Herbert T.

Napier, Carl H.
Niermann, Fred W.

Panning, Paul H.
Pennekamp, Victor F.
Piepkorn, Arthur C.
Poch, Martin C.
Pohl, Wallace A.
Prohl, Russell C.

Radtke, Ralph R.
Ramming, Martin E.
Reinboth, Oscar H.
Reiss, William J.
Ressel, Delvin E.
Richert, John V.
Robinson, Edgar L.
Robinson, Luther H.
Rodehorst, Ervin C.
Roetling, Paul J.
Rolf, Robert F.
Ross, Joel E.
Rubel, Leo E.
Runge, Francis M.
Ruppar, William A.
Ruthenbeck, Lehnert H.

Saar, Werner R.
Scharlemann, Martin H.
Schliesser, Luther G. H.
Schmidt, Arnold W.
Schmidt, Carl T.
Schmidt, Eugene S.
Schnedler, Wilfred J.
Schoech, Oscar W.
Schoech, Theodore G.
Schrader, Carl W.
Schroeder, Philip J.
Schubarth, George E.
Schultz, Frank E.
Schulz, Harold George
Senne, Arthur M.
Setzer, Worth A.
Spaude, Carl F.
Stahnke, Herbert H.
Stein, Frederick C.
Stein, Martin J.
Steinbeck, George L.
Stelter, Paul G.

Theiss, Henry O.
Thierfelder, Wm. R.
Tietjen, Ottomar H.
Tomasovic, Paul
Tonn, Emil T.
Tschirley, Richard A.
Tubesing, Karl A.

Vogel, Herbert P.
von Husen, Frederick L.
von Schlichten, Alex P.

Weber, Arthur M.
Weber, Edmund W.
Wenger, William A.
Werfelmann, Arthur O.
Wickham, L. Winfield
Wiese, Frederick A.
Wilhelms, Henry H.
Wolk, Henry C., Jr.
Wollslager, Clarence G. K.

Yauk, Martin

Zagel, Milton
Zinter, Reinhold H.
Zoch, Gustave A.

NAVY

Albrecht, Herbert C. W.
Beck, Max George
Dierks, William T.
Dreith, J. Floyd
Ernstmeyer, Milton S.
Fenning, Robert C.
Fritze, Herbert P. A.
Herrmann, Otto D. F.
Hohenstein, Raymond C.
Klug, Eugene F.
Kuolt, Milton G.

CANADIAN CHAPLAINS

Janz, Philip
Merklinger, H. A.
Otke, A. F.
Pearce, E. George
Pollex, Maynard F.

HONORABLY DISCHARGED CHAPLAINS

Bernthal, Herbert T. Relieved from duty Nov. 13, 1943. Physically disqualified.

Ferber, Gerhardt H. Retired as of Dec. 18, 1943. Physically disqualified.

Hahn, Clyde R. Retired Nov. 30, 1943. On an inactive status. Physically disqualified.

Imm, L. S. Retired July 26, 1943. Physically disqualified.

Knoernschild, Werner M. Received honorable discharge on April 3, 1943.

Roesler, Wm. J. Received honorable discharge Nov. 4, 1943.

Schleede, Karl W. F. Physically disqualified by War Department on June 21, 1944. On an inactive status.

Westerman, John W. (Regular Army). Retired Feb. 28, 1945. Physically disqualified. On an inactive status.

RESIGNED

Long, C. W. Resignation accepted by War Department Sept. 21, 1943.

Lotz, Walter J. Resignation accepted by War Department Oct. 28, 1943.

Moog, Alvin H. Relieved from duty Dec. 11, 1944.

DIED IN THE SERVICE

Hemmeter, Henry C. Passed away on Dec. 9, 1943.

Loeber, Paul E. Passed away on June 23, 1943.

Lohrmann, Markus E. Passed away on March 6, 1944.

Wertman, Mel E. Killed in aircraft accident on Feb. 23, 1945.

MISSING IN ACTION

Robinson, Eugene G.

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Other Lutheran Church Bodies

THE SLOVAK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The task of providing spiritual ministry to the men in the armed forces which was assigned to the Army and Navy Commission of the Missouri Synod concerned itself not only with the men of our own church group, but embraced also those of the Synodical Conference who requested participation in our program. Since the service established by the Army and Navy Commission was all-inclusive, the smaller synods found this channel ideal for the solution of the problem of spiritual ministry to the men in the services. As a result the Army and Navy Board of the Slovak Synod, appointed on Sept. 8, 1941, made the request that the names of the young men of the Slovak Synod be placed on our files. There are today approximately 2,000 Slovak Lutheran men in the service, and every day new names are added to those already on file. Young ladies, as patriotically minded as their brothers, joined the ranks of the WACS and the WAVES, as well as the Nurse Corps.

The board members of the Slovak Synod are the Rev. J. S. Bradac, chairman; the Rev. J. A. Mihok, secretary; and Mr. John Fabry, treasurer. Rosalie P. Gona is supplied by this board as secretary to the offices of the Army and Navy Commission and has exclusive charge of the Slovak files. *The Courier,* the official organ of the Slovak Luther League, is mailed first class to the men who are serving beyond the continent of the United States. In speaking of her work at the commission office, Rosalie P. Gona said, "Working along with the fine Christian-spirited staff at the Commission office, I can only say that the atmosphere we enjoy here really makes for real "at ease" and is something that cannot be found anywhere else but among true, high-minded Christians."

THE NORWEGIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

Fifty pastors of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church have also participated in the Army and Navy Commission program almost since its inception. The names and addresses of the Synod's service people are mailed to Pastor G. A. R. Gullixson, secretary of the Norwegian Commission. Pastor Gullixson, in turn, forwards the information to our office here in Chicago. More than a thousand of the Norwegian Synod men are with the armed forces and receive the same services accorded service men of the Missouri, Slovak, and Finnish synods. The Communion Record Cards and the *Service Prayer Books* are forwarded to service members of this Church, bearing the identification of the Army and Navy Commission of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Members of the Norwegian Commission are the Rev. H. A. Preuss, Calmar, Iowa, chairman; the Rev. Erling Ylvisaker, Madison, Wis.; and the Rev. G. A. R. Gulixson, Cottage Grove, Wis., secretary.

NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL SERVICE COMMISSION

LUTHERAN CHURCH BODIES other than the Missouri Synod were alert to the spiritual needs of their men serving with the armed forces of the United States. The National Lutheran Council organized a Service Commission and appointed the Rev. N. M. Ylvisaker, D. D., as Director. The members of the Service Commission today are Dr. P. O. Bersell, chairman; Dr. Armin G. Weng, secretary; Dr. R. E. Tulloss; Dr. Ralph H. Long; Dr. William Sodt; Dr. Martin Anderson. The headquarters of the commission was established at Minneapolis, Minn.

Since the aims and purposes of both commissions were identical in the main part, a meeting was held in Chicago, March 17, 1941, to discuss the problems confronting the Lutheran churches in the discharge of the spiritual ministry to the service men. It was quite evident that an alignment had to be effected between the two Lutheran church groups to avoid overlapping, prevent useless expenditure of funds, and to present a united front to Civil and Governmental officials.

It was found necessary to provide Service Centers to carry on the spiritual ministry and to serve as homes away from home. Since many camps were located in the Southern States, where the Lutheran Church is not represented in great numbers, these Centers were to provide opportunity for divine services and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Principles also had to be established concerning the *modus operandi* to safeguard the confessional position of both church groups.

A co-ordination of efforts in external things, such as maintenance and rentals, was found practical. In spiritual matters, however, the men of the respective church groups were to be referred to the representatives of the church bodies who were to be known as Service Pastors and who were to be assigned to each Lutheran Service Center.

It was no easy matter to develop articles of agreement acceptable to both church groups. Nevertheless, the following articles were adopted after mature deliberation.

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

Resolved:

I. That the Articles of Agreement pertaining to the erection of Lutheran Centers and adopted by the administrative committee of the Army and Navy Commission of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States and the Service Men's Division of the National Lutheran Council, should represent the general working agreement between these bodies, to wit:

A. That it be the general policy that only one Lutheran Center be built wherever necessary.

B. That the administrative committee of the Service Men's Division of the National Lutheran Council and the Army and Navy Commission of the Missouri Synod determine, in consultation with each other, in the vicinity of which camp the one or the other church group will build and maintain a Lutheran Center, in order to avoid duplication.

C. That in all cases where the one group establishes a Center, the other group will contribute an agreed sum toward the maintenance of the Center.

D. That the Army and Navy Commission of the Missouri Synod and the Service Men's Division of the National Lutheran Council instruct directors and staff members in charge of Lutheran Centers to respect the confessional position of the Missouri Synod and of the National Lutheran Council.

E. That the spiritual welfare work in the interest of members of the Missouri Synod be done by pastors of the Missouri Synod, and the spiritual welfare work in the interest of the members of the National Lutheran Council be done by pastors of the National Lutheran Council.

II. That where property is to be purchased and Centers are to be built, title to such property be vested with the body having the major interest in the community concerned. Such major interest to be determined by the administrative committees in joint session.

III. That the body holding title prerogatives shall inaugurate the purchase of property involved and superintend building construction, with the understanding that agreement be made in advance, as far as possible, of plans and approximate coasts of Centers to be built.

IV. That the total sums involved in the joint building program shall approximate a 60—40 per cent division, sixty per cent (60%) to be carried by the National Lutheran Council, forty per cent (40%) by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.

V. That where Centers are to be built, as determined by action of these two bodies, erection costs shall be borne by the body vested with title to same.

VI. The final disposition of all such properties shall be made on the basis of possession by holder of title.

VII. That maintenance costs shall be prorated on a fifty-fifty basis over an experimental period of six months, such maintenance costs to include items like heat, light, insurance, repairs, and janitor service. The equipment costs shall be prorated on a fifty-fifty basis.

VIII. That where common Centers are maintained on a rental basis the rent shall be prorated on a 60—40 per cent division, 60% to be carried by the National Lutheran Council and 40% by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.

IX. That all Centers, whether built by the two bodies or rented by them, shall be staffed on a basis of equality according to the intentions of Paragraph I or on the basis of such needs for either party as may be determined by the parties themselves. Salaries and expenses of staff members shall be borne by the party contracting for their services.

X. That, besides clerical members of such staffs, each Center secure the services of a competent hostess. We suggest the possibility of securing the services of the wife of some Lutheran officer on a neighboring Post or Station, or the possibility of enlisting on a voluntary basis the services of the women folk of officers or trainees in the community.

XI. That all policies of administration involving such Centers, whether purchased or rented, shall rest finally with the administrative committees of the two commissions meeting in joint session. Each commission may, however, to protect or further its own interests, employ the services of field representatives.

XII. That staff members and field representatives shall be responsible to the bodies employing them. In matters of difficulty involving both parties, such difficulties may be placed for final adjudication before the administrative committees of both commissions in joint session, with the understanding, however, that every effort to solve such difficulties first be made by the commission of the body where the difficulty may originally have arisen.

XIII. That these agreements, drawn with the sincere purpose and honest desire of fulfillment of their every detail, have been made in recognition of the positions, rights, and doctrinal expression of each of the parties to the agreement and with the desire to avoid duplication of effort, waste of funds, and such conflicts as may so easily arise where both are anxious to do their full duty to their country in a time of great emergency, to their Church in a time of severe testing, and to those members of the respective church organizations who in these perilous times more than ever need the consolation, guidance, and assistance of the Church of their faith and of the Savior of their souls.

XIV. That these articles may be changed, revised, and amended as experience and expediency demand.

Original and revised Articles VII and VIII.

Original — March 1941

VII. That maintenance costs shall be prorated on a fifty-fifty basis over an experimental period of six months, such maintenance costs to include items like heat, light, insurance, repairs, and janitor service.

VIII. That where common Centers are maintained on a rental basis, maintenance costs are to be prorated on a fifty-fifty basis, this distribution to prevail in covering both the rental charges and the charges for all equipment inventory and supplies, including heat, light, and janitor service.

Revised — April 1942

VII. That maintenance costs shall be prorated on a fifty-fifty basis over an experimental period of six months, such maintenance costs to include items like heat, light, insurance, repairs, and janitor service. *The equipment costs shall be prorated on a fifty-fifty basis.*

VIII. That where common Centers are maintained on a rental basis *the rent shall be prorated on a 60—40 per cent division, 60% to be carried by the National Lutheran Council and 40% by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.*

COMMUNION SERVICES AT LUTHERAN SERVICE CENTERS

After the joint program of the Army and Navy Commission and the National Lutheran Council Service Men's Division got under way and Lutheran Service Centers were established, it was found that a statement concerning Communion Services at Lutheran Service Centers was necessary in order to clarify the practice regarding the celebration of Holy Communion. Cases of casuistry, unique to the military, developed, so that minds of the pastors were confused, and guidance was necessary in extraordinary cases where pastors of both church groups were faced with the problems which the exigencies of war brought to the foreground. Another meeting of both groups was held to establish governing principles in the administration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. This meeting was held on March 4, 1942, and the following statements were adopted:

STATEMENT AS TO COMMUNION SERVICES AT CENTERS

1. "In order to adhere to the principles of agreement entered into by the two groups, the representatives of both groups will make the proper announcements of the Communion Services which are held.

2. "The rule shall prevail and be recognized by representatives of both groups that members of the respective groups attend the Communion Service conducted by the representatives of that particular group.

3. "In exceptional cases, where a member of one group desires to attend the Holy Communion Service conducted by the representative of the other group, the individual case is a case of casuistry and must so be considered by the pastor concerned in each instance."

The chaplains of the Missouri Synod and of the National Lutheran Council have received copies of these "Agreements," and it has been suggested to them that on the basis of these "Agreements" the chaplains apply the principles agreed upon also in their relations one with another.

These "Articles of Agreement," as a rule, have been followed by the chaplains of both Lutheran groups, and experience shows that they form a basis for a policy which is feasible in the ministration of the Lord's Supper to the men of both Lutheran groups in the armed forces.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. Just as in our ordinary civilian church life there are exceptions to the usual procedure in the ministration of the Lord's Supper, thus exceptional cases arise to be dealt with among the men in the armed forces.

2. Everyone in the armed forces who is not in full fellowship with the Missouri Synod and yet desires to partake of the Lord's Supper when celebrated by a Missouri Synod chaplain or pastor constitutes a separate and individual case. In like manner everyone in the armed forces who is not in full fellowship with the National Lutheran Council and yet desires to partake of the Lord's Supper when celebrated by a National Lutheran Council chaplain or pastor constitutes a separate and individual case.

3. In exceptional cases synodical fellowship is not a necessary pre-condition for admission to the Lord's Supper. We must guard against legalism on the one hand and laxity on the other.

4. The chaplain or pastor may commune such men in the armed forces as have been instructed in the need of Repentance, in the Essence of Faith, and in the doctrines of the Real Presence and of the Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace, and profess acceptance thereof.

5. Chaplains or pastors are encouraged to take a very sympathetic attitude toward the men in the armed forces which constitute these exceptional cases in the ministration of the Lord's Supper, for under the prevailing war conditions many men are hungry for the comforts of the Lord's Supper. It is to be understood, however, that the exception must not become the rule.

6. Chaplains or pastors are encouraged, furthermore, to have notices in bulletins, etc., possibly every Sunday, announcing the celebrations of the Lord's Supper scheduled by the representatives of both the National Lutheran Council and the Missouri Synod, thus adhering to the principles set forth in the "Articles of Agreement" and avoiding an undue multiplication of the exceptional cases.

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